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Little White Lies

Truth & Moons

ANOTHER
EARTH



I FELT
LIKE
ANYTHING
WAS
POSSIBLE
AND IT
WAS

NEAR SPACE CORP



CHAPTER 1 in which we
review ANOTHER EARTH

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A N O T H E R E A R T H

MIKE CANNELL'S FUSION OF SCIENCE-FICTION AND PHILOSOPHY SUGGESTS THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE FOR A RESURGENT GENRE.

Directed by Mike Cahill
Screenplay by Matthew William Maguire, Novel by William
Released December 14



M

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the Cahill's *Another Earth* offers a fractured reflection of what might have been. Not as an story of that time and uncertain futures, but as looking back to a science-fiction cinema that took its cues from the explosive ideas of Carl Sagan and Arthur C. Clarke rather than the experience dreams of George Lucas. On that other Earth, the genre remained a crucible of ideas, with Stanley Kubrick and Andrei Tarkovsky as heroes.

Another Earth may not stand comparison with the work of those masters, but that confidence debate lends its weight to the retrospection of *Open-Ended* (2011). Showcasing a keen intelligence and understated style, its most obvious contemporary point of reference is Duncan Jones' *Moon*. And yet, like Jones' debut, *Another Earth* is very obviously a first film—with both the energy and the inexperience that suggests. It's an ambitious but flawed drama that boldly announces Cahill's arrival—not his presence.



Late night: A house party. Rhoda Williams (Iris Martin), who co-wrote the script with Cahill, is celebrating her acceptance into MIT. As she drives home, the radio announces a miraculous discovery—a new planet in the sky bearing all the hallmarks of an Earth-like ability to sustain life. But in the same breath of discovery comes tragedy, an accident that will alter the course of both Rhoda's life and her world.

Picking up the pieces several years later, two narratives will play out. As Rhoda is drawn irresistibly to widower John (William Mapother), driven perhaps by compassion, but more likely by guilt, contact is made with the new planet, dubbed "Earth 2," and an incredible, impossible revolution occurs.

These two threads—one, a macroscopic study of individual lives in statu, the other, a civilization-scale story of infinite possibilities—will intertwine to create an icy tableau of stagnation and broken dreams. ▶



"PART-METAPHOR, PART-MYSTERY, PART-MACGUFFIN, EARTH 2 AFFORDS CAHILL THE OPPORTUNITY TO MUSE ON THE BIG QUESTIONS THAT CLEARLY FASCINATE HIM."

Shot in a palette of frigid blues, whites and greys, *Another Earth* foregrounds the emotional isolation of John and Rhoda [John's grief has monumental, becoming an almost physical thing that infects everything around him with decay. His home is layered with grime and cluttered with memories, but in a symbolic act Rhoda will come to clean it once a work—pretending to be somebody she's not, and yet, at the same time, discovering the person she really is.

Cahill allows their relationship to develop at a languid pace, lingering on close-up shots caught in shafts of pale sunlight, and framing his actors in close-up. *Another Earth* isn't a beautiful film, exactly (it has a grainy DV-like texture, screams, "Take me seriously!"), but it possesses a serious visual sense. It is thoughtfully even self-consciously composed, but in very subtle ways threatens to leave the drama coaling in front of you.

The dramatic dynamic between Rhoda and John isn't compelling enough to

withstand such extended scrutiny. John spends the majority of the film in the dark about Rhoda's identity—and in that little more than a cipher for her healing process. How much richer would their relationship have been if Rhoda had told him the truth, making John emotionally complicit in their affair and forcing him to deal with his own feelings of trauma and guilt? John's ignorance strips him of complexity, and so key scenes between them fail to speak. When John, a composer, takes Rhoda to an empty concert hall and plays for her, it's supposed to suggest intimacy and revelation. Instead, it feels like you're intruding on someone's slightly embarrassing "moment".

Trapped as she is in this cello/ing misery, you can sympathize with Rhoda as she goes madly at the new planet and dreams of escape. As it happens, an omnipresent is offering the chance to win a seat on a private space flight, a competition that Rhoda enters



and wins, crash to John's dreamy life life along with his house — in beginning to feel the benefit of a woman's touch.

But *Earth 2* is where Rhoda's (and Cahill's) heart really lies. Part-satiric, part-mystery, part-MacGuffin, it's an inspired idea that affords Cahill the opportunity to muse on the big questions that so clearly fascinate him: *Earth 2* is a counterpoint to the fantasy of escape that Rhoda is already enacting with John. But like any fantasy, all it does is reinforce just how trapped we are in the present. It's a constant reminder of a life just out of reach — at once tempting, promising and mocking.

In voice over, Dr. Richard Berendson (a former teaching assistant of Carl Sagan) waxes lyrical, wondering about the mystery of ourselves. Do we — can we — know ourselves? Would we recognize ourselves if we were ever to meet? Then Rhoda tells a story about the first Russian in space, connected

by a ticking sound whose origin he couldn't discern. Facing the risk of being deconstructed, he closed his eyes and the ticking became a symphony he used escape only to be found in the imagination? Is that where science and redemption meet? Where peace is? If so, what is *Earth 2*?

Cahill raises these questions but isn't interested in the answers. Of course, there aren't any answers. Or perhaps there are too many. His film concludes with a crescendo of uncertainty, in a smart way that throws open new ways of looking at what has gone before. It also, it should be said, suggests narrative circumstances that aren't addressed but should be.

It's a fittingly ambivalent conclusion to an imperfect film — one that swings from sophistication to ineptitude, from breezy inquiry to dramatic inertia. *Another Earth* is original, intelligent, and economic — a true American indie that deserves to be noticed

and supported. But part of that support is respectful criticism of its shortcomings. On second thought, maybe it doesn't actually announce Cahill's arrival at all — just the start of a journey that will hopefully take us somewhere worth seeing. **B**

Anticipation. Come out of nowhere with a killer similar to the dark days of summer. Could this be the antidote to blockbuster fatigue?

4

Engagement. You and so. There's a lot to enjoy, but a bit of blockbuster polish wouldn't have been a bad thing.

3

In Retrospect. Full of promise. Keep an eye on Cahill.

3



The Elder Scrolls V

SKYRIM

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"MAKING FANTASY A REALITY"
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GRAND PRIX CANNES 2011

FROM ITS OPENING SHOT"



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Every one of us is, in the cosmic perspective, precious. If a human disagrees with you, let him live. In a hundred billion galaxies, you will not find another.

Carl Sagan, 1960



IMLise:

What do you love about movies?

Mike Cahill:

What do I love about movies? Oh my gosh.
Um... Movies... As opposed to, like, novels
and poetry or anything? I mean there's
a power of movies that is very specific,
that is through pictures and sound...
How does this work exactly: through pictures
and sound on a box on a wall we can be
transported to an emotion we might not have
experienced? Being John Malkovich does it well
where they, like, literally get to be John
Malkovich, but a movie is a Being John
Malkovich experience all the time.
You connect with the protagonist and you
go through this intense experience and
learn something about what it means
to be human.

Erit Marling:

Oh my gosh... You know, I love when you
go to the cinema and the lights go down and
you're with an audience, but you're not
talking to each other, and a story plays
out and it enters you, and for this
period of time you forget yourself.
You forget the period of time you're in,
you forget all of it and you surrender
to someone else's point of view.
You're profoundly, deeply moved, and you're
connected to yourself and you're connected
to everyone else in that audience and
you're connected to all the filmmakers
behind it. Something about that
experience, when it's done really well,
can be intoxicating. A great movie reaches
out to you in that void and grabs your
hand and reassures you you're not alone.
I guess that's what we all want really
- to feel like we're somehow not alone.
A good movie can make that happen, or
make the loneliness more bearable, maybe.



Hebrew, patristic and contemporary



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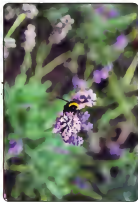
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I'M STILL HERE

DEBUT DIRECTOR MIKE CAHILL MAY BE LIVING
THE DREAM, BUT HE'S KEEPING HIMSELF
GROUNDED IN THE HERE AND NOW.

T

hers was an agent at the studios at Georgetown University. She was blond and beautiful, and she was on her feet – leading a modeling career for Mike Cahill. Cahill couldn't see her, though. He was up on stage accepting an award for the short that had just taken first prize at the university's film festival. He was playing it cool and wasn't wearing his glasses. All he could do was peer into the crowd as his co-director, Zol, stared in awe. "Which girl?" Zol asked him.

"Which girl?" Cahill replied.

The girl came up to them later and introduced herself, said she was called Brit Marling, said she loved their work, said she'd do anything to be part of their films – hold a boom, a light, whatever. "Why don't you stay in them?" Cahill suggested.

This is not the origin story of *Another Earth*. It's only on paper of it – the seeds of a partnership that would take root and grow. The beginning? That happened much earlier – in New Haven, Connecticut, in the mid 1980s, when a mother bought her son a toy camera for his birthday. He was seven-years-old and was soon to have a revelation.

His name was Mike. He probably didn't have long black hair and he definitely didn't have a mustache, although he has both today – like a refugee from a war that the alternative kids lost. At seven, he might have been cute. Maybe he had the same spontaneous laugh. Maybe the same way of being intensely present.

Mike had a thing for Matchbox cars, so the first thing he did with his Fisher-Price Polaroid was like one of them as he pushed it along. Then he had an idea. He filmed his brother pretending to drive, then he went back to the car. Watching it on tape, it looked like Mike's brother was actually driving the car. He sensed he was onto something big.

At seven-years-old, Mike Cahill had discovered montage. "It seemed that if you juxtapose images you can create a new narrative – that the combination of images together creates a new meaning," he recalls. "That was feeding me [showing for me] because there was power in it."

This is the origin story of *Another Earth* – the power of discovery that implanted a sense of wonder and possibility in a boy. They were emotions that gestated as the boy got older, got an economics degree and started experimenting with video art. Eventually, they'd force him to drop everything and set out on a \$100,000 self-financed lecture film.



There's been a lot written about the resurgence of twenty-first-century science fiction, but the thing is, most of it is stale. *Another Earth* takes its place alongside *Pleasant*, *Moon* and *Morpheus* as a home-grown genre piece inspired not just by advances in affordable technology, but by a spirit of intellectual adventure that harks back to the great moments of the '60s and '70s.

Cahill got switched on to sci-fi after he moved to LA and started driving around the city while listening to an outtake of Dr. Richard Berman's. Berman was an acolyte of the master, Carl Sagan, and his measured drawl about the cosmos, Calileo, Aristotle and the library of Alexandria provides a "beautiful emotional narrative" that captured Cahill's imagination.

Technology, too, was critical. Cahill had always been an experimenter – whether producing video art under the pseudonym "Dale Teeth" or just pointing and shooting, trying things to see what happened. "I like playing," he says, framed against a bare brick wall in the JWU's office, "just having cameras around, shooting stuff, even if I'm going to throw it away. I didn't go to film school, but I made my own film school through experimentation, watching, editing up material and reading every screenwriting book I can get."

He learnt a few tricks – some technical (like shooting someone in the frame, then shooting the same frame without them and dissolving the two so that the person disappeared), some emotional.

— But the breakthrough came one day when he tried composing two versions of himself and conducting an interview.

"I sat down, then another version of me came and sat down opposite, and one we started very obviously

interviewing the other," he recalls. ▶



"Then I thought, 'What if we really could capture someone? What would you feel if you could sit across from another version of yourself? What judgments would you have on that person? What emotions? Would you like that person or hate that person? Would you think they were making bad choices or good choices?'"

Confident that he could crack the technological nut, Cahill wrote three scripts with Morling that were designed to offer her a series of acting challenges linked by a loose narrative. But as they got deeper into the third script, *Another Earth*, "it just grew and took over."



It — all the technical challenge of the effects and the intellectual challenge of a story inspired by some of cosmology's deepest questions, like any indie film, it was the practical problems that occupied Cahill during the shoot. But there were problems he embraced. "Whether it's budget insinuat or time insinuat or whatever, is some ways it's a gift to the artist because it creates a wall within which you need to use cleverness and ingenuity to figure a way out," he reasons.

Cahill's method was to divide the shoot into "germ-ideas" and "off-their-heads." On-their-heads involved doing things properly — or as properly as they could on a budget. So the car crash that sends Rhoda to prison was shot on a stretch of highway in New Haven that had been closed for the night by an old crop busting of Cahill's. They rented a couple of cars for pretty cash and found scorching winds in a junkyard. They couldn't afford a crane to get the final bride/eye shot, but they got a cherry-picker for 20 bucks and figured out how to stabilize. He confesses: "I remember being on top after shooting the crash and looking round and going, 'This is awesome! This is, like, one of the best days of my life!'" Cahill says.

But it was the off-their-head shoot that saw Cahill earn his spurs as a genuine, "germ-idea" indie filmmaker. "My motto is, 'Everything's permissible until you ask permission,'" he says. "Once you ask for permission everybody says 'no,' so sometimes you have to figure out how to get something done. I think anyone in those situations who is desperately passionate about what they're trying to do ends up doing something illegal once in a while to make something that means something."

On *Another Earth*, crunch time came when they needed to shoot Rhoda leaving prison after a four-year stretch. They weren't going to waste time and money asking for a permit, so after finding a suitable place in Connecticut, Cahill and Morling rented up with a plan. Cahill shot from the car while Morling approached the prison entrance with a yoga mat. She told the duty officer she was there to take a class with some inmates, and while the officer went to check her belongings, Morling dropped the mat, walked out of the front door and filmed the scene.

"All of a sudden we were surrounded by five cops," laughs Cahill. "They took us out of the scene and wanted to take our tapes. We said we were location scouting for a bigger movie, so they introduced us to the warden. He loaned movies to him. We sat down with us and had a coffee, he gave us his card and said, 'Call me if you want to use our prison — we'd love for you to use it.' We were like, 'Sounds good to us — we've already got the shoot.'"



"Shooting wrapped but the story was barely half over. Eight months of editing followed before

Cahill ended up with a draft of the movie, which, he says, "moved me — like, authentically, genuinely moved me." The Sundance selection agreed, choosing *Another Earth* as one of 10 entries for the festival here. Cahill's 10,000 submissions. It received a standing ovation at its premiere.

So what's charged for Cahill? Everything and nothing. "You know whenever you travel, you have to write your profession on the passport declaration? Before, I'd always write 'filmmaker' in quotes. After Sundance I was like, 'I am putting that in bold print!' Its surreal. It's everything I dreamed of as a kid."

But Cahill is still here — on this Earth, not some fantasy planet of Hollywood's invention. He's got another film to shoot (about reincarnation), and if he's got a bit more cash in his pocket to make it, it's still going to be a modest effort. There'll all be those residents, those walls that need scaling.

And yet he looks unfazed. "The role of a director is to be an authenticity meter," he says as we prepare to pack up. "To check what's coming through the lens, is it reading as fake or is it reading as real? That comes from a certain sort of intuition and a certain sort of observation — you have to pay enough attention to what real humans do in real situations, and I don't think that goes away. So in that way,

"I think I'm the same." ☺



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PHILOSOPHER, AUTHOR AND FILM FANATIC
MARK ROWLANDS JOINS THE DOTS FROM
DESCARTES TO SCHWARZENEGGER IN THE MOST
THOUGHT-PROVOKING SCI-FI MOVIES EVER.

It is the old story: Bay even gets of his dreams — literally. His really asleep in a pod and is deceived into thinking otherwise by the machines that are using his body as a battery. Girl persuades Bay to wake up, and a mere two and a half movies later, the machines get their comeuppance — sort of. This, of course, is arguably the greatest philosophical movie trilogy of all time: *The Matrix*.

These movies — especially the first — are an exploration of a question made famous by philosopher, mathematician, scientist and occasional imaginary René Descartes: "What can I know?" If we assume — as Descartes did — that knowledge requires certainty, we can find out how much we know by working out how much we can doubt.

Descartes argued that we can't be certain of (therefore can't know) very much at all. We can't even know that there is a world outside us. To make this point, he imagined an evil demon — his version of the machines — that has its fun by getting people to believe things that aren't true.

So while we think we inhabit a real, physical world alongside almost seven billion other people, this is really just the demon/machines deceiving us. This idea may sound frivolous, but it really is a way of making vivid a simple point: Nothing we ever experience can justify the hypothesis that there is a real, physical world over the hypothesis that we're being deceived by a powerful intelligence — for our experience is equally compatible with both.

The second hypothesis might sound silly — but that, of course, is just what the demon/machines want us to think. Things get truly tricky when we realize that if the demon/machines can make one artificial reality, they can presumably make many. That is, the ratio between the real world and artificial reality would be one to many. So, if nothing about experience can lead us to favour the real-world hypothesis over the artificial reality hypothesis, then the balance of probabilities would seem to favour the artificial reality hypothesis. It turns out that we are more likely to be in the matrix than what we call the "real world." *Idiotclass! Maybe.* But where is the flaw in his argument?



Descartes eventually escaped his doubts through the claim, "I think, therefore I am." I cannot coherently doubt that I exist, because if I didn't exist, who would be doing the doubting? That I exist, therefore, is something of which I can be certain — something I can genuinely know.

But in fact, things are not as clear as Descartes imagined. Even if it is certain that I exist — who is this "I"? It's this conundrum that takes us to the second great philosophical sci-fi movie, *Total Recall*.

Hauer (Arnold Schwarzenegger) is an agent who wants to infiltrate a rebel movement on Mars. The movement is questionable, however, has a leader with telepathic abilities who would easily sniff him out. So Hauer has a set of false memories implanted into his brain. ►

— memories that effectively transform him into another person. Guaid, who has no inkling of Hooper's existence.

To cut a long story short, Guaid successfully infiltrates the movement, but when push comes to shove and his history is revealed, he decides he has no intention of going back to being Hooper, and defends his new identity with all of the gratuitous violence one has come to expect and love in a midcareer Schwarzenegger movie (i.e. a lot more than *Koolhaas's Cop*).

Test Recall is a defence of what is known as the 'memory theory' of personal identity: What makes you the person you are — the same person as you were yesterday and different from any other person? According to the memory theory, it is your memories that do this. A scene late in the film that sees Arnie break free of a chair to which he is tied and then proceed to massacre his adversaries with the arms of said chair, is perhaps the most stirring defence of memory theory ever conducted.

Interestingly, later in his career, Arnie apparently renounced his commitment to this theory. The *4th Day* presents a passionate case against the memory theory by way of a duplicate-alphabetical* the possibility of two different people who have exactly the same memories.

In his later offering, Arnie is pushed to the frontier of a position defended by the Oxford philosopher Derek Parfit. Each one of us is not a persisting person, but merely a constant and rapid succession of different people housed in the same body. This theory might be safer unless if you have, say, fathered a child with your housekeeper. You can, in that case, truly say to your wife, 'It wasn't me, I didn't do it.'

Alternatively, you might prefer another line of defence: 'I couldn't help

it, I had no choice.' This is the argument put forward by *Ministry Report*. In Spielberg's film, Tom Cruise is the golden boy of the precinct unit whose job it is to stop crimes before they are committed. Helping him is a trio of preps — sons of future crimes — until, one day, they see a murder and Tom is the prep.

Ministry Report is an exploration of the philosophical problem of free will: causes make their effects

**"A SCENE THAT
SEES ARNIE
BREAK FREE OF
A CHAIR AND
MASSACRE HIS
ADVERSARIES
WITH THE ARMS
IS PERHAPS THE
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DEFENCE
OF MEMORY
THEORY EVER
CONDUCTED."**

inevitable. Everything that occurs has a cause. Therefore, everything that occurs is inevitable. But if everything is inevitable, our actions, choices and decisions can't be free. Worse still, suppose not everything that occurs has a cause. An event like that would just happen for no reason. It would be random — something outside anyone's control — and therefore still not free.

That option, causes don't make their effects inevitable, but they do influence them. But all 'influence' can mean is

'partly inevitable, partly random' and so still not free. Other way we can't free: free will is one of those things that we routinely assume we possess, and people might be rather upset if they were to discover that they don't have it. That's a pity — because it's unlikely there's any end to this.

Some think that without free will there can be no morality — and morality is the theme of the final film on this list, an offering in the invisible man genre. Paul Verhoeven's *Hollow Man* is an exploration of a question first discussed by Plato: 'Why bother being moral?' Ruthless — sanction of various levels of severity from simple disapproval to execution — is one reason. But suppose this were somehow taken away. Would we have any reason to be moral then?

Plato used the mythical story of the Ring of Gyges to explore this theme. Gyges, a shepherd, discovers a ring that makes him invisible. He uses it to kill off his rivals and eventually becomes king. In a similar vein, in *Hollow Man*, Kevin Bacon plays a man who is not very nice to begin with, manages to make himself invisible and becomes completely insufferable as a result. One same uncomfortable moments for Elizabeth Shaw, and, of course, a bad end for Kevin Bacon.

Just when he thought he had taken sanction out of the picture, it comes back and bites him. So, implicitly the movie never gets past sanction as an answer to this fundamental question of morality. That's not just philosophically disappointing, it's psychologically worrying. ☹

Mark Bowden's 'The Alphas' and 'The End of the Universe' is available now from Doris.

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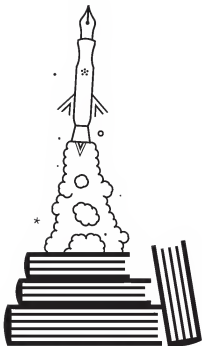
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AT THE GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER
IN MARYLAND, A UNIQUE COLLABORATION
BETWEEN NASA AND US PUBLISHER TOR
PROMISES TO SPARK A NEW SCI-FI BOOM.
LWJES GETS THE LOWDOWN...

SPACE
CAMP

Twenty-two years before Neil Armstrong bounced on the moon, writer Robert Heinlein imagined three rocket engineers embarking on a lunar mission in a spaceship converted to run on thorium and zinc. Nineteen years before NASA put the first satellite in geostationary orbit, Arthur C. Clarke proposed using a set of satellites in fixed positions to form a global communications network. And 19 years before the first robot was created, Isaac Asimov invented the Three Laws of Robotics, which are still studied in electrical engineering classes at universities. The pantheon of scientific and fictional brilliance feed each other.

But the country that developed paleontology, put men on the moon and developed the atom bomb — inspiring *Jurassic Park*, *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* along the way — is in danger of losing that brilliance. In America, none of the sciences feature in the 10 most popular university courses and, according to a state-sponsored review of science education, *Staying Above the Gathering Storm*, nearly half of adults in the country don't know how long it takes for the Earth to circle the Sun.

To reverse the trend, NASA has teamed up with book publishers for to produce accurate trilogies inspired with tales inspired by the latest technology. From November 29 to December 1, a team of writers handpicked by Tor will

pile down to the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, where they'll use the latest NASA gadgets in action and learn from the specialists who operate them.

Enrico Scilingo-Arce, an electrical engineer at Goddard who negotiated the collaboration, hopes that the scientification inspired by these real developments will prompt future generations to take up techno geekery. "Young people don't seem to be interested in science and engineering, and I'm worried about NASA's workforce — that it's not going to be there," he says. "Hard scientification writers like Isaac Asimov, Jules Verne and HG Wells have been key to innovation because they dreamed of stuff way before it was possible and inspired a lot of kids to turn what lay in their imaginations into reality. Our idea with the Tor collaboration is to inspire future generations in that way."



ishing to revive a sense of wonder that con- sumes into discovery, Tor President Tom Doherty is grinning like a five-year-old over the deal. In fact, he's a 78-year-old soul: whereas who's been in the business since the 1950s, hanging out with astronaut Buzz Aldrin and helping Bill Pope produce his scorching book *How Do You Go to the Bathroom in Space?* ▶

A lot of classic titles such as *Analog* and *Galaxy*, Doherty has recently seen a dip in hard sci-fi and he wants to build on the connection between fiction and reality. "The sci-fi I grew up with was awe-inspiring and filled with positivity, it explored the potential for growth and the wonderful things that people could do," Doherty enthuses. "The most impressive idea I read about back in the 1950s was solar power — a story in which someone created a silver satellite and broadcast power from the Sun down to Earth. But now sci-fi has branched out and much of it overlaps with fantasy. I read sci-fi extrapolates from what we know and envisions what might be, and that adds something more to a story — it's more than just pure fantasy. We need to get kids into it in order to innovate, explore and look to the future."



To churn out a new breed of hard sci-fi novels, for writers will be given a tour of Goddard and then thrown into a speed networking event where they'll chat for five minutes at a time to the Space Center's specialists. The plan is to fill their brains with ideas — and Goddard is bristling with inspiration.

One of 10 NASA facilities across the US, the centre is responsible for operating scientific satellites, including the Hubble Space Telescope, which produces explosive images of space, the Solar Dynamics Observatory, which can detect flares from the sun, the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, which recently beamed back images of the equipment left on the moon by the Apollo missions, and the Cosmic Background Explorer, which studies the pattern of radiation formed by the Big Bang.

On top of the fancy stuff, Goddard also oversees technology that many of us have in our homes. Temporal navigation made from "memory foam" were designed by NASA for astronauts' beds; some of the techniques used to polish spectacles were developed by the space agency to clean telescope lenses; and Xbox 360 handhelds contain NASA technology that enhances communication. "And of course, we have the International Space Station and all of the weather work that we do," says Santiago-Acea. "We know where all of the meteorological stuff is happening and a lot of what we do is part of our day-to-day life."



Once the writers have picked themes for their stories they'll continue to have access to NASA scientists and will be given the chance to shadow them while they work. The resulting novels can follow whatever lines they want, but all of the science must

be spot on — Goddard's guys will pick over the completed works to make sure that they don't get off into too fantasy land. "When I'm watching a movie that involves space travel or other scientific principles, sometimes I think, 'Hrrm, I don't think that's possible, that's against everything we know,'" says Santiago-Acea. "If you see that the right set of principles are there and the sci-fi seems possible, you make a better connection. You don't get distracted by things that don't make sense."

In the vein of Santiago-Acea's sci-fi hero, Michael Clayton, most of the stories will be thrillers, written by authors (yet to be chosen as NASA went to print) who have a science background. Doherty is a Captain Roner kind of guy who'd like one of the novels to be about a hero who cleans up the Earth. "To me, the most exciting technology being developed is for harnessing clean energy sources," he says. "It's up to the writers to dig what they want, but stories might be something like a bunch of guys who are putting generators into the gulf stream to harness its power. They'd have enemies out for money or terrorists from the Middle East trying to stop them, but the heroes with vision will triumph."

Santiago-Acea is also into the idea of stories based on Earth — she wants to see technology manifest like NASA devices that can be used to analyse data from CT scans and MRIs in the novels. But the bigger sense of wonder she gets from Goddard lies in galaxies far, far away. "Seeing things in space excites me," she says, beaming off. "I think it's amazing. Before, we thought there was only us — just Earth — and then we saw planets and we saw the stars, and the stuff we see is just a tiny part of what is out there. The possibilities are endless. Now NASA's Kepler mission has identified planets similar to Earth that might have lifeforms. I find a planet with a similar environment to ours. It could have life that looks just like us, although I'd like to be more positive than to think that aliens would come here to exterminate us, blast us into oblivion or steal Earth."

Countless novels over the past century have explored the potential for life on other planets, so where will sci-fi go next? "Discoveries that change the way we see our place in the universe have the biggest influence on the genre and the most important ones have been Einstein's Theory of Relativity, artificial intelligence and robots," Santiago-Acea explains. "It's amazing how far we have moved in 20 or 30 years and I think that quantum mechanics has a lot to do with it."

It's all starting to boggle the mind. Throwing Einstein's Theory of Relativity into doubt, on September 24, scientists at CERN's large Hadron Collider in Switzerland found that neutrinos — ghostly subatomic particles — may travel faster than the speed of light, potentially opening up the possibility for time travel. It's science, jeez, but not as we know it. ☹

THE COUNTER-EARTH THEORY IS BACK IN VOGUE, FILLING OUR SCREENS WITH DUPLICATE PLANETS IN BOTH ANOTHER EARTH AND MECHANICALLY THERE'S JUST ONE PROBLEM: IT'S RUBBISH. HERE'S WHY

A bit Marlowe's character in *Another Earth* points out, scientific consensus once had it that the Earth was flat. What few people realize, however, is that as far back as the ancient Greeks, radical philosophers were suggesting that the Earth was, in fact, spherical.

It was Philolaus, who, in the late fifth and early fourth centuries BC, ruled that heretofore missing alignment of the stars and planets must mean that the Earth is rotating around not only a central point, but also on its own axis. Depending on this, Philolaus concluded that the moon also be true of every other body in the universe, including the Sun, Moon and remaining planets. For Philolaus, the point of the rotation was the "Central Fire" - a celestial body that housed the gods themselves.

But this theory posed a problem for the philosopher and his fellow Pythagoreans: it meant that there were only two existing bodies in the universe - the spheres of fixed stars, the five planets, the Sun, Moon and Earth itself - in the Pythagorean view, our universe was infinite, logical and symmetrical; a notion that was repugnant to any Greek and doubly so to a Pythagorean who believed in the significance of the perfect number 10. So Philolaus deduced that there must exist a "CounterEarth", hidden from sight behind the Sun but conceptually acting as a counter weight to our own.

planet
it sounds
completely
banal and modern
science will tell you it's
impossible Johannes Kepler's
second law teaches us that a
planet revolves faster when it is
closer to the Sun so logically if a
CounterEarth was to exist and followed
the same orbit as our Earth, it would be
visible or speed a point of the year.

What's more, we'd actually feel the
gravitational influence imposed by a Counter
Earth. Hundreds of space probes and missions
to the Moon would have been thrown into
disarray as the mathematics required to get
them there would have been missing or unknown
variables. It's with a heavy heart that science is
forced to conclude that there is no mysterious planet
lurking beyond the sun.



And yet the late Harvard philosopher George
Berkeley Burch argued differently or at least
altered a last line of defense for the Greeks
thinking "The theory of the CounterEarth is a
less than intelligible or whimsical" explained
Burch in a 1954 paper. "This thought
cannot be expressed in terms of modern
mechanics, because modern mechanics
does not have the concept of a center of
space. But Philolaus' mechanics did."
Burch resurrected the reputation of
the CounterEarth theory. Sure
it may look stupid now
but it was at the cutting
edge of maths and
philosophy in its
day.

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BRIGHT STARS

BRIT MARLING MAY BE THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK, BUT THE 27-YEAR-OLD WRITER AND ACTOR DOESN'T NEED HOLLYWOOD'S APPROVAL TO SPEAK HER MIND.



esville, France. *Another Earth* has just sent the crowd at the Normandy-based Festival du Cinéma Américain into a shamed rapture. And Brit Marling is basking in it.

In doing up on nine nights since *Another Earth* took Sundance by storm and its film-savvy lead was cast into a comic-relief critical darling and "It Girl" type. One the come of 2011, Marling has become, essentially, to a whirlwind routine of screenings, junkies and protocols, as she and director/cowriter Mike Cahill have taken their ambitious indie debut from Park City to Poughkeepsie (where *Another Earth* opened the 10th Hudson Valley Film Festival) in late September.

But if awards ceremonies and red carpets have become Marling's meat and drink, she's quick to distance herself from the show of the biz. "It never occurred to me that I would be dressed in velvet,

and heels and red carpets," she explains in a breezy, glibly "Honesty, I'm completely shocked at that part of it. It seems so comical. But it's okay. It's all in good fun, I guess."

Glitz and glamour come with the territory of being attached to a breakout hit — get ask the likes of Jennifer Lawrence and Carey Mulligan. But Marling, shoulder-to-shoulder with her now, high-flying contemporaries, however, and her devotion towards the simplicity of Hollywood feels ancient. "So much of the process of doing press for this film has been about the surface, what you're wearing, how you look. I can see how it becomes distracting, the presentation and the passing of it all. That's fine, but it's not me."

"At the end of the day, no matter how big the set becomes and how much money is behind it, my job is always to attempt to tell the truth and not be false and naive. That's the thing I find most



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effective about acting, you spend every day working on your innocence and your vulnerability. It's the opposite of what the rest of the world is telling you to do." If her integrity is beginning to look a little wide-eyed, now's the time to add some context.

OO-gee-OO

Six years ago, a career in the movies was a microscopic spark on Marling's life chart. In 2005, she graduated from Georgetown University with a degree in economics, only to turn down a job offer at an investment bank after deciding that she wanted to be an actress. She admits to being "horrified" while performing in various high-school plays, so what prompted this seemingly hasty change of heart?

"Mike and I moved Georgetown and began making short films with Zal Batmangli [who directed *Sound of My Voice*, Marling's next film], and I was exposed to the way acting scared me," she explains. "It inspired something of me that I had known intimately in childhood and areas abandoned, which is this terrific sense of imagination." Anxious, rebellious, Marling swapped DC for LA, renting a small apartment in Silver Lake with Cahill and Batmangli, and casting the hope of finding a role in the film *Industry*. No agent and a blank résumé made getting noticed tough, but Marling is an advocate of enterprise, not leaving things to chance.

"I wanted to act and Mike really wanted to direct. We were both unable to figure out how to begin that, so we decided to do something together. At the time, Mike had made a video art piece of himself interviewing himself in split-screen. We were watching that and at the same time we were listening to Dr. [Richard] Berensson, who's this really wonderful anthropologist, on tape, and something about the nature of whatever was going on or that tied led to this story."

She continues, bringing *Another Earth* into view. "It started as just Mike and I telling this story to each other out loud. We were doing that for a long time: telling the story back and forth and writing character profiles and trying to just really entertain one another. And then we came up with the ending and at that point we were just rehearsing around the apartment speaking. A movie is such an endeavor and it takes up so much of your time, you really have to feel like you have something amazing to share—and at the point we really felt like we did."



As *Willie* picks Marling's brain over the delicious ambiguity of *Another Earth*'s ending, the conversation comes back to destiny

and post decisions. For a brief moment, like her character, Marling finds herself reflecting on what might have been. "I don't know what would have happened if I had continued on that path. I guess now I wonder what kind of person I would be, maybe there's another *Bitt* out there running a hedge fund."

After chawing over the "what if?" thrown her way, Marling asserts that she's not in two minds over the choices she's made. "Sometimes if you're good at something and you know how to do something well, you ease and up anything on that path for too long," she says. "I felt a little bit like I had been following this thing that I was supposed to do. I don't regret studying economics and following that trajectory for a while, but I came to a point where, honestly, I just felt my mortality. I am not for forever, you know? My lifetime is just the universe dragging me shoulders. It's so brief. Am I going to waste it doing something I don't fully believe is the right thing for me? No way."

There's another layer to all this existential small talk. Unusually for a new girl on the scene, Marling is keen to establish herself as a storyteller as well as a screen presence. Just 27, she already has three writing credits to her name—*Another Earth*, *Sound of My Voice* and the upcoming *The East*—a string she's added not as a fallback but as a direct reaction to the current state of her trade. "When I first decided to act, the things that I could read for or go out for were... they just hurt my heart to read, and the thought of going to do them just overwhelmed me in a negative way."

"So many of the parts for young girls... you're usually passive. Things are happening to you, but you're never driving the action of the film, you're often being tied up or held at gunpoint or raped and someone's saving you. All of those positions are part of life, they don't not happen, but I couldn't figure out how I was going to wade through that swamp and still be the same person on the other side. I realized that if I wanted to be an actor it would be useful to try to learn how to write."

Marling suggests that "we live so much of our lives based on what we see in the media and television" that the repression of dominant women in cinema is symptomatic of the patriarchal social fabric we share. "I want to try to write more good parts for women," she says, "because there aren't as many as there are talented women to portray them."

"I like the idea of figuring out what the female journey is because I don't think we really know," she adds. "I think most of our storytelling is derived from a style of mythology that is mostly written by men. It's hard to really know what the female story is because the truth is, women haven't been writing it for that long." ☺

"A STAGGERING WORK OF GENIUS"

TRINITY



TIME OUT



STUDIO



EMPIRE



THE TIMES



CLASH

OSLO

AUGUST 31

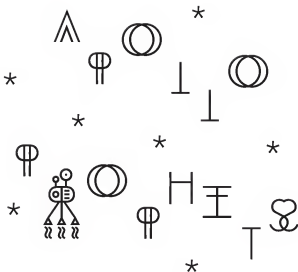
A film by Joachim Trier

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OPENS [CURZON] ODEON NOVEMBER 4

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PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF
NASA/JSC/ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

FROM SMALL STEPS TO LUNAR LEAPS, THESE ARE THE ASTRAL VISIONS THAT BECAME THE LAUNCHPAD FOR MANKIND'S IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

ERLANGER CRATER
- 370° FAHRENHEIT



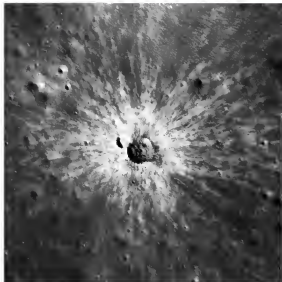
There is something haunting in the light of the Moon,
it has all the dispassionateness of a disembodied soul
and something of its inconceivable mystery

00

Joseph Conrad, 1900

55793 143.243 433.774 -299.7074

THE SHORE OF SINUS IRIDUM
47° 9' N, 31° 7' W



To see a world is a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Held infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour

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William Blake, 1803

THE SCHRÖDINGER PYROCLASTIC CONE
- 75° S, 132° E



Art thou gale for weariness
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the Earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth
And ever chasing... like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

OO

Percy Byron Shelley, 1820

ORIENTALE BASIN
CALIBRATED DATA RECORD 17,651 05



Mex who have worked together to reach the
stars are not likely to descend together into
the depths of war and desolation

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Lyndon B Johnson, 1958

EJECTA BLANKET
CLEMENTINE MISSION [100 MPX]



I suppose we shall soon travel by our vessels,
make air instead of sea voyages, and at
length find our way to the Moon, in spite of
the want of atmosphere

∞

Lord Byron, 1802

55787 347.668 429.383 298.2443



REFLECTION

TEN FILM PEOPLE TELL LWEIES HOW THEY WOULD
BREAK THE ICE WITH THEIR DUPLICATE OTHER.

MIKE CAHILL

If I met another me, I would observe for a while. I wouldn't say anything. I would watch.

•

BRIT MARLING

I would ask what moves her the most.

•

JOHN HURT

"Well, fancy meeting you here."

•

WOODY HARRELSON

Hey dude, you look like you could use a little rest."

•

SETH ROGEN

I'd punch him in the face and run. If the Terminator films have taught me anything, it's if you see a duplicate of yourself, they're there to replace you.

•

EMILY BROWNING

"Why do you look so nervous?"

•

MICHAEL SHANNON

"What's that thing in your belly, Luv?"

•

JOACHIM TRIER

Dude, can you please, please, please do all the press for me so I can go make another movie?

•

MICHAEL FASSBENDER

"Do you know the number of a good psychiatrist?"

•

STEVE MCQUEEN

"Push it farther."

FLY ME TO THE MOON

WORDS BY CYRUS SHAMHEAD

NASA'S SHUTTLE MAY HAVE BEEN PUT OUT TO PASTURE, BUT THE SPACE RACE IS FAR FROM FINISHED. A NEW ERA OF PRIVATE SPACEFLIGHT IS ABOUT TO UNFOLD AND *WIRE* IS GOING ALONG FOR THE RIDE.

* In June 2011, the Economist ran a headline that it claimed summed up a series of international disputes. "The End of the Space Age" was a whimsical allusion to what it saw as the mythical remnants of space exploration: The Space Shuttle, which would complete its final mission the following month, had been "having bad trouble," the long-lived International Space Station (ISS) was "the biggest waste of money" at \$100 billion and counting, that has now been built in the name of Science. "China might still be talking about a manned mission to Mars sometime before 2020, but for the western powers at least, the fun of the stars had just run its course."

Such accusations rest on any number of factors: some believe that federal-sponsored space exploration is too bound up by bureaucratic red tape, others blame the proliferation of space travel or the enormous costs involved in sending men and women beyond Earth's atmosphere. But underneath it all lies a more serious doubt — that the ancient hunger for exploring worlds beyond our own no longer exists.

It might be less than 40 years old, but John F. Kennedy's famous speech about choosing to go to the moon "because new hopes for knowledge and peace on earth" is of another age entirely. Buoyed by Cold War politics and the spirit of scientific risk, the astronauts of the '60s and '70s were popular heroes, their achievements seeming to numerically outpace humanity as it reached for the stars.

* No more. Instead, many believe that we've learned nothing in the subsequent decades but our own limitations, that we've blundered at the empty expense surrounding Earth and rushed home, tails between our legs, fulfilling a prophecy envisioned in 1959 by Kurt Vonnegut: "The Sirens of Space," in which someone brings "like stones" like space found only "what had already been found in abundance on Earth: a nightmare of meanness, nastiness and evil."

It is a view given short shrift at the California offices of Space Exploration Technologies Corp., or SpaceX, set up by PayPal cofounder Elon Musk in 2002 — the same year his online payment

provider was said to allow for \$1.5 billion. In less than a decade, SpaceX has positioned itself at the forefront of a raft of private space exploration companies vying for both commercial and federal contracts. In June 2010, it inked a \$492 million deal to deploy Indian telecommunications satellites with its Falcon rockets, and it will soon begin writing cargo missions to end from the ISS via its Dragon spacecraft as part of a 12-month, \$1.6 billion contract with NASA. Biting the hole left by the retired Shuttle in the process, for SpaceX, at least, the end of the space age is nowhere in sight.

"It's the opposite, in essence," says space veteran Kristin Bajer Greenhouse. "It's the end of one era, but it's the necessary end of that era if we're going to move forward." NASA has always hired private companies to build its craft, the difference now is in contracting. "We're looking to have a private partnership where we bring in private investment and new industrial principles. And when you bring in competition, that forces every company to compete on cost, reliability and safety. It may start as a race for Earth's orbit, but it's going to second opportunities for space travel that we've never seen before."

* The real issue is a cultural one. Despite the enormous sums being spent, away by federal and commercial contracts, SpaceX's success over its competitors is largely due to its ability to reduce prices. That has been the expense of space exploration, after that technological limitations, that has stalled progress in the past. The iPhone may be a billion times more powerful per unit currency than the summing supercomputers in question around the time that first stepped on the Moon, but the amount of fuel needed to break out of the atmosphere means that a similar upscaling of efficiency has so far proved impossible in space travel.

"It's through a willingness to experiment with new designs and invest in new materials and fuels, SpaceX is managing to offer comparatively cut-price flights. Its forthcoming Falcon Heavy rocket is expected to carry up to 53,000kg payloads for \$100 million per launch — one-third the cost of the Delta IV rocket being sold by major competitor United Launch Alliance, a joint venture between Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

Cheaper launches mean more missions, more missions mean market case progress faster also go further. Ultimately, however, all companies still the somewhat mythological idea that a craft will

one day be entirely reusable, taking off, entering orbit and returning to Earth without having to jettison rocket stages en route. The Shuttle was only partially reusable (the solid rocket boosters could be reused after several months' sitting work, but the external tank was typically discarded). If a completely reusable, quick turnaround craft were invented, it would revolutionize space travel. A kind of class, some think, but not to those at SpaceX.

"That is our goal," says Bajer Greenhouse. "Every time you turn up a rocket on twenty (the equivalent of having to buy a brand new \$200 million Boeing 747 each time you fly from Washington to London. Of every \$100 million space launch, perhaps only \$100,000 is fuel. Once we figure out a way of reusing vehicles, we're talking about an ensuing decrease in cost. Some people think it's impossible, but to us it's the holy grail of space exploration."

* This isn't the whole story. There are those who would argue that SpaceX's true holy grail is a far more fanciful idea than slashing prices on satellite deployment or supply missions to the ISS. SpaceX's commercial and federal work is largely a way of bootstrapping research into the development of that last Elton Musk to establish the company in the first place: his dreams of colonizing other planets.

It's a dream that rests on the assumption that an evolutionary disaster of the type that eradicated the dinosaurs is a real threat — one that needs to be insured against by establishing human outposts on habitable planets. It's not some cosmic horror narrative that SpaceX is trying to hide: the company has already agreed up to backfire a forthcoming unnamed NASA mission to Mars, the main aim of which is to explore the potential of recoverable life and — by proxy — its potential as a sustainable "stepping stone" from Earth.

"The idea is that even if the odds are very small that something catastrophic could happen on this planet, we should prepare for that happen," says Bajer Greenhouse. "We've gone from single to multicellular life, from living in the water to living on land, but this is the first time in the history of

human evolution that we've had the ability to live on other planets. And we need to take advantage of that before it's too late."

Musk is just one of a number of billionaires seeking to push the progress of human evolution beyond Earth's atmosphere and in doing so secure their place in the history books for having made something other than money. Robert Bigelow, who conceived the future with a chain of budget hotels, has already launched two prototype space stations through Bigelow Aerospace and has plans to put a working station in orbit as early as 2014.

Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, has his own more secretive space exploration company, Blue Origin, which operates a space website, boasts a business symbolic crest and offers only occasional media

thoughts into the development of its vertical launch and landing New Shepard rocket program. Amid the portents of graciously grumpy, level-billionsaires — affectionately known as "hellions" — one voice is, as usual, more vocal than most. In 2004, Richard Branson bought the design of SpaceShipOne, winner of the privately funded Ansari X PRIZE, which aimed to speed up technological developments by offering \$10 million to anyone successfully launching a craft into suborbital space and recovering it there in two weeks.

SpaceShipOne was designed by engineer Burt Rutan and landed to the tune of considerably more than the prize pot by Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen, and completed a small craft that detached from its White Knight mothership at an altitude of around 50,000ft (15.2km), before igniting its rocket and powering up to around 150,000ft (45.7km).

* The space tourism arm of Branson's empire — nearly named Virgin Galactic — is set to employ a spacecruiser, however, member variation called SpaceShipTwo, also designed by Rutan, operating three-and-a-half-hour flights from Letchford to landing 100 which only a

"THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY THAT WE'VE HAD THE ABILITY TO LIVE ON OTHER PLANETS. WE NEED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE."

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human evolution that we've had the ability to live on other planets. And we need to take advantage of that before it's too late."

Musk is just one of a number of billionaires seeking to push the progress of human evolution beyond Earth's atmosphere and in doing so secure their place in the history books for having made something other than money. Robert Bigelow, who conceived the future with a chain of budget hotels, has already launched two prototype space stations through Bigelow Aerospace and has plans to put a working station in orbit as early as 2014.

Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, has his own more secretive space exploration company, Blue Origin, which operates a space website, boasts a business symbolic crest and offers only occasional media

thoughts into the development of its vertical launch and landing New Shepard rocket program. Amid the portents of graciously grumpy, level-billionsaires — affectionately known as "hellions" — one voice is, as usual, more vocal than most. In 2004, Richard Branson bought the design of SpaceShipOne, winner of the privately funded Ansari X PRIZE, which aimed to speed up technological developments by offering \$10 million to anyone successfully launching a craft into suborbital space and recovering it there in two weeks.

SpaceShipOne was designed by engineer Burt Rutan and landed to the tune of considerably more than the prize pot by Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen, and completed a small craft that detached from its White Knight mothership at an altitude of around 50,000ft (15.2km), before igniting its rocket and powering up to around 150,000ft (45.7km).

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fiction is suborbital, and barely six minutes weighted from the Mojave Air and Space Port in California. Soyuzers draw attention to the environmental impact of regular rocket flights, not to mention the inherent dangers – the latter highlighted in 2007 when an explosion during ground testing killed three engineers – but nothing seems capable of stemming the tide of people pre-booked \$200,000 flights with \$20,000 deposits.

It might sound like a lot of money, but it's a trip compared to what civilians have paid in the past for the privilege of seeing the Earth from space. In 2001, American engineer Dennis Tito paid \$20 million to spend seven days at the ISS, he was followed by South African software mogul Mark Shuttleworth in 2002 and US entrepreneur Greg Bresh in 2004. Virgin Galactic, by comparison, has dreams of one day offering a significantly cheaper service to the general public, but BBC science correspondent Martin Redfern remains dubious of it ever becoming a truly democratic way to travel.

"It's always going to take a huge amount of energy to get somebody into space," he says. "I imagine the cost will come down eventually – you might knock a zero off the price tag in 20 years time, but it's still going to be comparable to the most expensive luxury round-the-world cruise you can imagine. I don't think anyone will be sunning them."

Not, as Redfern points out, should potential customers lose sight of the fact that what they're buying is still only a suborbital flight – a stunning view of the Earth and a wonderful rush of weightlessness, but a short and bone-rattling experience that remains a long way from the fantastic voyages of science-fiction.

If anything, suborbital space tourism is a glorified exploration of Earth's immediate atmosphere rather than a space odyssey in the conventional sense. And that's largely in keeping with the current shift in how we as humans 'live' space, which is now seen less as Vernor's vacuum of 'meaninglessness without end' and more as a near-Earth resource rich in day-of-the-future, teeming with satellites that control everything from television and credit card transactions to phones, farms and weapons of modern warfare.

"The shift has been from exploring space for spaces sake to using space for achieving X, Y or Z," says Ben Bassey-Walker, one of a new generation of 'space lawyers' and head of the Emerging Hi-Tech Threats to Global Stability Programme at the UN. "We're standing at the end of the era of spacefaring space exploration and we're talking about the application of space, about how best to use it for our various ends. And as more and more nations get involved – more than 60 states now operate their own satellite systems and more than 190 countries rely on space services in some way – the more important it becomes to make sure that their aims are likely to create a secure space environment for the long term."

The likes of Bassey-Walker have been instrumental in championing the emerging field of space regulation – defining the legal responsibilities surrounding everything from the creation of space debris to the weaponisation of space, all issues with huge potential importance in mitigating future disasters, but which seem to take as ever further from the heroes of the golden age of space travel. To which end, it seems, *The Economist* may have had a point. In our space, it claimed, war wasn't, quite, space war history.

Or perhaps not. Even in the comparatively workmanlike task of taking tourists into suborbital space, on Virgin Galactic flights, the brilliant engineers and buy-in billionaires who themselves grew up with noses pressed to their blackboard while television screens hoped to register dreams of space travel in a new generation of potential astronauts, putting mankind's post-Ford evolution back on track and the hunger for exploring other worlds back in its heart.

"We stand a very big chance of losing our ability to inspire our youth," said an impassioned Sue Ryan at a TED talk in 2007. "I feel very strongly that it's not good enough for us to have generations of kids that think it's okay to look forward to a better version of a civilization with a video in it. They need to look forward to exploration. They need to look forward to colonization. They need to look forward to breakthroughs. We need to inspire them, because they need to lead us and help us survive in the future." ①



"British drama at its best"
Best for Film

Junkhearts

Eddie Marsan

Romola Garai

Tom Sturridge

John Boyega

Candice Reid

"Eddie Marsan gives
a brilliant
performance"
Total Film



Directed by
Bafta Winner
Tinge Krishnan

15

Contains strong language
and some violence

In cinemas from 4th November, Junkhearts tours around the UK with director Tinge Krishnan

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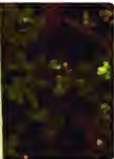
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The Future

Directed by *Miranda July*

Starring *Miranda July, Ramon Linhart, David Warrick*

Released *November 4*

There's no point sitting back and letting Miranda July's second feature, *The Future*, wash over you. Like her protagonist Jason, you must step into, past the sea and walk through its matted strands. Because over the course of 90 minutes, July creates an environment, like an art installation, that you can explore and experience. But you must work for it.

Serues and themes that tackle love, commitment and the formidable "what now?" appear and disappear like clouds over a landscape of found objects, lost treasures and discarded parts. Search them out and you can find your own meanings among the dross. As with her performance art and video chain letters, July wants you to step inside the screen. You are the actor in your life, she suggests, not a passive spectator.

The LA-based couple at the centre of *The Future*, Sophie and Jason (played by July and Ramon Linhart), are struggling to take control of their own humdrum lives. With dead-end jobs, thwarted ambitions and laptop-induced melancholia, their days are kind of huge. So they decide to rescue a stray cat, which they can collect in a month. Knowing this will be their last moon-orbit of freedom, they quit their jobs and try to redirect their paths—door-to-door

actress for Jason, and 30 YouTube dances in 30 days for Sophie.

But their rebellion is short-lived and they soon fall back into society's line—about more weakly than before. Sophie has an affair with suburban dad Marshall (David Warrick), and Jason befriends an old man who sells cheap household items in a free-ads newspaper.

All of the characters in *The Future* are outsiders yearning to come in, and July juxtaposes them with their environments to highlight this discord. We meet the stray cat, Paw Paw—who falls in a car, croaky voice (July's own)—in his cage at the rescue centre, dreaming of never spending another night in the cold. Then there's Marshall's daughter, who hates herself snickering in the moonlit garden. And Sophie herself, standing awkwardly outside Marshall's house wearing her nightie in the morning. These characters don't fit this world and in these scenes they stand out, like cottons in hell fire, reflecting on the situation or

The Future is a coming-of-middle-age comedy for Shaker kids in three degrees, those Gen X adults who grew up without many prospects and are now facing the next stage of their lives with even less.

It would be easy to hate this film. First of July's directorial debut, the 2005 Cannes d'Or-winning *Me and You and Everyone We Know*, will be familiar with her eclectic, other-toned and sometimes postmodern style—but it's much more of a challenge to understand it. You never know among all the otherworldly references: talking moons, little happen, old Christmas cards, Fischer paintings and gothic eyes—you may not discern some home truths. **Shelley Jones**

Anticipation. Cinema's indie darling is back with another offbeat rom-com for disconnected old souls

4

Enjoyment. Long silences, muted colours and moon-eyed existentialism provide the backdrop for your own thought-making

3

In Retrospect. A playfully self-aware dig at the emptiness of some modern lifestyles that will make you inventory your own

4

Philip Seymour Hoffman

Plain Sailing

Interview by Adam Woodward

Select Filmography
Philip Seymour Hoffman

Jack Goes Boating (2008)

Don't (2008)

Synecdoche, New York (2008)

Charlie Wilson's War (2007)

Before the Devil Knows You're Dead (2007)

Mission: Impossible III (2006)

Capote (2005)

Cold Mountain (2003)

Punch-Drunk Love (2002)

Magnolia (1999)

The Big Lebowski (1998)

Boogie Nights (1997)

Hard Eight (1996)

Scent of a Woman (1992)

"I'm a theatre guy. I got into acting because I wanted to be on stage," admits a reflective Philip Seymour Hoffman. "I always saw movies as something I wanted to do, I guess, but I didn't really know how you got into that. Really, I've been known as an actor because that's what's got the higher profile, but the theatre is where my heart is. I'm just kind of happened."

Distilling his standing as one of cinema's most well-suspected dramatic actors allows Hoffman to maintain focus. His steady rise to prominence over the past two decades has been fortified by a tireless work ethic. Before bagging a handful of supporting roles in the early '90s, Hoffman was busy setting Off Broadway single following his graduation from New York's Tisch School of the Arts in 1989.

Now Hoffman has combined his two passions, adapting a play for his star-crossed directorial debut. Originally produced by the Labyrinth Theatre Company (where Hoffman was co-artistic director for more than a decade) and from the pen of playwright Robert Ginsberg, *Jack Goes Boating* marks both a natural progression and a fresh challenge for the off-the-beating-East Coast thing.

But what was it about this offbeat urban comedy that prompted Hoffman to adapt it for his first foray into the unforgiving world of feature filmmaking? "When we were rehearsing the play, everyone would always comment on how onerous it felt. So we thought it would be a great thing to do," he says. "It felt like a logical extension of what we'd been doing for a long time, so we kept going down that path and collaborating and working on the film as we had done the play. That's really how it came about; it wasn't something that I'd been searching for or that I made happen."

There's an anecdotal manner about the way Hoffman describes how he brought the project from stage to screen, and how the role of director found him. Yet his evolution from actor to director can't be attributed to chance. Since joining Labyrinth in the mid '90s, Hoffman has scored as and directed a number of critically acclaimed productions, including *The Seagull*, *The March of Women*, *True West* and *Abyssmal*, which he scored from Sydney to London and back.

He's gruffed hand and picked up a clutch of awards along the way, including a Best Actor Oscar and two Tonys. "Making films is something that's been in the back of my mind for many years," he says, "but I guess it's taken me a while to realize that ambition because it's a really tricky thing. I had a hard time with it, but I've got to give some thanks and gratitude to the other actors because they really did such good work and that really helped me out. I would just be there yelling, 'Cut!' Although I was helping there as a director, when I had to act they really helped me out and guided me when I needed it."

As Hoffman asserts, *Jack Goes Boating* is not a one-man passion project. *Alexsandro* has all the way was Labyrinth co-founder John Oates, who not only plays Jack's best friend and colleague in the film but, having worked closely with Hoffman for the past 15 years, provided "a solid base" on which to develop the plot and characters. "We think you're going to follow this one relationship — Cammie and Jack's — and that you closely make the relationship you're following is the one that started the movie: the two men. In that respect, it was really important for me to be able to rely on John and have someone giving their input into the direction of the characters' relationship."

"You begin with there and you end with there," he continues. "It's a really nice development and it's where a lot of the scenes live. It should be called *Jack and Chad*, to be honest with you."

That Hoffman prizes sustained collaboration comes as no surprise. After all, he's grown close with one of the most fruitful artistic kinships in modern cinematic history. Since 1996 (when caper *Heat* 1996), Hoffman has played major parts in all but one of Paul Thomas Anderson's five features — the exception being 2007's *There Will Be Blood*. Now, after a rare decade-long break, Hoffman and Anderson are back together filming *The Master*, a 1950-set drama about a charismatic preacher whose new faith takes America by storm.

Although chronologically unable to comment on the film itself, Hoffman reveals that working with Anderson is likely to have some bearing on his growth as a director. "Working with Paul is always special and I consider myself very lucky to be doing so again. Obviously it's hard not to be influenced by someone so skilled and proficient as what they do. I'll probably take more away from this project than I might have done before I started directing. It's been a while since we've worked again, although we talk from time to time and I think right now it's an interesting point in both of our careers."

But while *The Master* is still in the early stages of production, audiences may have to wait even longer for Hoffman's next directorial venture. "I definitely want to direct another film some time but I don't know when that will be. I'm more immediately interested in directing more plays, and acting still takes up the majority of my time, especially film, because you're often away on a shoot for weeks at a time and that can be pretty disruptive," he says. "I think it'll be at least a year before I direct anything again, but after that I will direct a movie again because I had a lot of fun doing this and there's a lot more I want to achieve as a director."

Check out the full transcript online now.



Jack Goes Boating

Directed by **Philip Seymour Hoffman**

Starring **Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Ryan, John Ortiz**

Released **November 4**

... and ship! Philip Seymour Hoffman goes directing in this well-attended but flat-footed wander through a shy New Yorker's dysfunctional daily grind. Hoffman as Jack, a fortysomething blue-collar omega male looking for a soulmate to fill the void in his stagnant life. Enter money-strapped Corinne (Amy Ryan), who takes a shine to Jack after a fumbled blind date set up by mutual pals Clyde (John Ortiz) and Lucy (Daphne Rubin-Vega). After watching the fruits of their match-making labour begin to bloom, Clyde and Lucy are forced to acknowledge the faults in their own domestic set-up. He doesn't trust her, she doesn't respect him. Their marriage is a mess.

While watching his best (indeed, only) friend's relationship unravel, Jack relishes the newfound attention for self-improvement that comes with finding that special someone. He learns to cook, taking culinary tips from Lucy's former place on the side... and agrees to let Clyde help him find his water wings ahead of a sailing date with Corinne. With the rhythmic lil of his favourite reggae track, The Melodians' "Rivers of Babylon" (quack sang +10), stuck on infinite repeat, Jack systematically moulds himself into a better man.

As well as being overwhelmingly sympathetic, these sequences mark *Jack Goes Boating* as yet another overwrought thumb-rubbed obscurity with romanticising the plights of the everyman. As an actor, independent cinema has the ability to provoke thought and stir emotions in a manner often beyond the grasp of the mainstream. This isn't aided in its worst, but hairs of pedestrian relationship drama, however sincere, certainly won't be saved.

Hoffman the director is never out of his depth, but it's disconcerting just how laboriously he wades through the plot. Having faithfully transplanted the story from its original stage incarnation... Hoffman, Ortiz and Rubin-Vega all reprise their roles. There's little evidence of any character nurturing Hoffman the actor, meanwhile, is an up turn, although Jack is by some stretch the most credible, engaging protagonist in this assemblage of media and self-gloating spouses.

Most surprisingly, it's Amy Ryan, the outcastic ace in the pack, who makes the slightest impact. Admittedly, there's not a great deal for her to work with, but she's positively unrecognisable from the powerhouse actress who stole *Good Bye, Lenin!* and sparred with Hoffman

in *Capote* and *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead*. She may pull off cerebral-chai well enough, but her talents merit something with a bit more oomph. Instead, it's left to *Boys n' the Boat* director Tom McCarthy to give proceedings a shot of wryness, popping up in a cracking supporting turn as Dr Bob. Corinne and Lucy's story gets rock-quack whirling best.

Had Hoffman taken a more direct cut from McCarthy's deadpan, observational style of despairing situation comedy, *Jack Goes Boating* might have been worth shouting about. Still, with *Pat's Holiday* out this month, and *PDA's The Master* on the horizon, you can bet it won't be long before we're back singing Hoffman's praises. **Adam Woodward**

Anticipation. PSN adds RIR to his CV

Engagement. Sincere but formulaic indie moment

In Retrospect. Take Jack's bond and give that one a miss



Straw Dogs

Directed by **Sam Peckinpah**

Starring **James Marsden, Kate Bosworth, Alexander Skarsgård**

Released **November 4**

Controversial, nasty and fascinating, Sam Peckinpah's landmark 1971 rape/revenger thriller was all the things this outrageous Hollywood remake isn't. But screenwriter Red Liarne's modern update is still something of a surprise.

Forty years ago, Dustin Hoffman was the dinky American mathematician who takes his young British wife, Susan, back to her native Cornwall farmhouse, where their twisted lives are torn apart by her ex-boyfriend and his armed cronies.

Why more artilly called than you'd expect, Liarne's remake carefully follows the path of the original while adding a few ideas of its own. Switching Cornwall for the Deep South, Mississippi, it's also propped up by a strong cast, adding their game dramaticity James Marsden plays David, an intellectual LA entrepreneur; Kate Bosworth is Amy, his TV-actress wife. And Alexander Skarsgård is good 'ol boy Charlie, the town's co-pick and Amy's former high-school beau.

Harsh, lush and oppressive, Liarne accurately captures the look and feel of small-town America and makes gorgeously measured work of bringing violence to the boil. David immediately rubs the natives the wrong way by arriving in a Jaguar and

trying to buy a light boat with a credit card. At home, he listens to Beethoven, works on a screenplay about Salazar (yubba!), keeps fit by stepping rope and does nothing to stop Charlie and his boys leaving at his neglected wife as the jogs around in microscopic shorts and no bra.

But Liarne, a former-film critic-turned-screenwriter, can't find a convincing final doorway into the film's dramatic core of violence. Amy's double-rape – famously argued over by critics, censors and feminists – remains extremely uncomfortable, but it loses the terrible ambiguity of Peckinpah's version.

More crucially, David's psychological arc finally missing-up by sinking down into primal fury – just doesn't stick convincingly. One minute he's listening to Beethoven. Next minute he's grabbing a nail gun, a bear trap, two pots of boiling oil and smashing a man's head to a pulp to defend his home.

Then off into much bloodier – by him and us – in the whole poem of the film unmaking the savage animal that still crouches in the most civilized modern man. Violent and gapping as it often is, however, Liarne's version fails to show how David 'went' but loses everything he stands for in the process, leaving you wondering just what the whole film actually has to say for itself.

Then again, the fact that nothing in *Straw Dogs* quite shocks like it needs to perhaps says more about our cooling for screen carnage than it does about Liarne's film. Even if it's less provocative than the original, the daring of the cut and the edginess of the themes make this much more interesting than most studio films. The characters? Skarsgård, in particular, has a charisma with new, deeper shades.

There was a danger that a Hollywood remake of *Straw Dogs* could've been a simple, shallow, exploitative exercise (see last year's *I Spy as You Guess*). At the very least, Liarne's effort emerges as something much more serious than it might have been. **Jonathan Crocher**

Anticipation. Controversial '70s landmark reduced by Hollywood films

2

Enjoyment. Uneven but intriguing and much, much better than expected

3

In Retrospect. Marsden, Bosworth and Skarsgård are superb. But what was the point?

3

This Our Still Life

Directed by **Andrew Köiting**
 Starring **Andrew Köiting,**
Leila McMillan, Eden Köiting
 Released **November 18**



Evoing as a series of drawings – now collected in a beautiful book – *This Our Still Life* offers a beguiling and expansive portrait of “Loyang,” the remote, unadorned Pygmy tribe-hole that filmmaker Andrew Köiting shares with his partner Leila McMillan and their daughter Edna (the “we” of the director’s first feature, surreal British road movie *Gullfaut*). A family of artists for whom creativity flows like blood, life in this part-time rural idyll is idiosyncratic, redemptory, fun and intense.

Filmed over a 10-year period on a Nikon Super 8 and a primitive Scanomag digital camera with accidental music from either the radio or Edna’s own CD collection (music composed by Scanomag also featured), the film explores notions of nostalgia, memory, isolation and love as it offers watched insights into the minutiae of the Köiting family’s everyday living.

Reeling from season to season, the film also depicts the passage of time and the surrounding

elements, including the local wildlife that encroaches, sometimes threateningly so, on the Köiting’s domesticity. Combining the director’s playful and experimental approach to the representation of sound and image, *This Our Still Life* uses cut-aways and sound bites to ensure that this portrait stays far and away angled narratives, resisting the easy categorization of biography or documentary.

Spurred into making the wealth of material following a Christmas 2004 viewing of *Sun Bridge*’s *Die Mein Sie*, Köiting describes his most recent creation as being about “who we are and what we do.” Influenced by the director’s beloved *The Moon and the Melancholy* and by Gilson Koppell’s more recent *Stop Periodically*, the film continues the interest in landscapes, family and topography that have driven *Gullfaut*, *The Fishy Bunch*, *Foot* and the director’s numerous other non-finite-length forays into the aridly remote regions of the moving image. This is a methodically

and ultimately profoundly moving and affecting work. Viewing it is a very strongly recommended, whether you’re already part of Köiting’s select but vociferous fan club or not. **June Wood**

Anticipation. A new film from one of the brightest under-heard voices in contemporary British cinema **4**

Enjoyment. A unique and astonishing portrait of people and place **4**

In Retrospect. Intriguing, innovative and undoubtedly one of the director’s very finest creations. This is a film to cherish **4**

Machine Gun Preacher

Directed by **Marc Forster**
 Starring **Gerard Butler,**
Michelle Monaghan,
Michael Shannon
 Released **November 2**



Won’t somebody please think of the children? isn’t *Machine Gun Preacher*’s tagline, but considering the film’s unapologetic lack of nuance or restraint, something that real adolescents would have been entirely fitting.

Not that in depiction of a war-torn East Africa, where children are the ones who bear the bloody brunt of warlord Joseph Kony’s hideous political campaign, is something to be excused. The war in northern Uganda is a topic worthy of in-depth scrutiny and *Preacher* intelligently finds its way as to the true story of *Sun Children*.

Coming from left-over-out-wearing druggie to born again Christian, Childers (Gerard Butler) embraces his faith and answers a call for help from Uganda, where he gets caught up in the troubles. Portraying Children with low-key accents, Butler is fantastic. He’s an unlikely hero whose addictive personality has him dogged with the same frenzied energy that fueled his boozing benders.

But by focusing so intently on Childers, director Marc Forster does his film a disservice. That’s especially apparent in the casting of Michelle Monaghan and Michael Shannon (as Childers’ wife and buddy respectively), who are given leads of intriguing subplot that never have a chance to

germinate. Meanwhile, less involving characters get more screen time – including a woe little boy who’s pure cliché.

All that could have been forgiven if *Preacher*’s Uganda segments packed enough wallop. But as the real victims of the conflict emerge in their bloody masses – those delendend children – Forster did his homework his message home with a mallet. Repeatedly *Machine Gun Preacher* constantly tumbles into undignified preachy territory before the film’s final six minutes under the considerable weight of those hard-bitten images. **Josh Winkler**

Anticipation. Fast buzz hasn’t been great, but Butler looks on good form **3**

Enjoyment. Lacking entirely in subtlety, *Preacher* fires on all cylinders and quickly burns itself out **2**

In Retrospect. Overly preachy and overly long. Chalk it as a missed opportunity **2**

The Awakening

Directed by **Nick Murphy**
 Starring **Rebecca Hall,**
Bonnie Wier, Imelda Staunton
 Released **November 11**



This is a time for ghosts, since the movie opens in 1921. Nick Murphy's *The Awakening* thus enters a 1921 war and wariness have killed millions and left survivors haunted. The next is a doctor (complete with authoritarian reflexes) from the book *Strange Things Happen* by one Florence Colfaxer, who will turn out to be the film's protagonist. And so *The Awakening* has already begun the strange dance of fact and fiction that will later continue as an isolated boarding school where strange boyish pranks and night terrors reveal truths about trauma, guilt and how we allowed to peek through.

We first meet Florence (Rebecca Hall) engaged in her own masquerade, speaking into a London silence to debut proceedings. Yet as she exposes the fraudulent speaker's bag of tricks with all the forensic acumen of a ghosthunting Sherlock Holmes, the sequence also reveals

a truth about the human need to believe.

Florence rises on a new case as a Cambridge school said to be haunted by the ghost of a boy murdered there decades earlier, and more recently the stone of another boy's death. Armed with scientific apparatus and her own deductive powers, she quickly sees through the ghosts to a more rational explanation. But then, after the schoolboys have headed home for Christmas, she stays on, alone but for war-scarred schoolmaster Robert Mallory (Domonic West), master Maud (Imelda Staunton), vacation boarder Tim (Iain Hampshire-Wright) and war-shaking outsider Judd (Joseph Mawle). Images that share an otherness, too, lurking in these corridors, if only Florence could see what is before her eyes.

Everything about this classic ghost story is assured, from the performances to the period

detail, from the time-lapsed locations to the bleached-out palette – all held together by an exquisitely crafted screenplay that carefully sets up satisfying twists while retaining a haunting ambiguity to the end. **Aaron Hill**

Anticipation. These days (non-Spanish) ghost stories inspire suspicion. **3**

Enjoyment. "Don't look away. You mustn't look away." **4**

In Retrospect. An elegantly constructed masquerade, but its haunting sadness rings true. **4**

The British Guide to Showing Off

Directed by **Joe Berntson**
 Starring **Brian Eno,**
Andrew Logan, Richard O'Brien
 Released **November 11**



Perhaps the most interesting moment in Joe Berntson's blithe portrait of the Alternative Miss World pageant – an outdoor art spectacle of chaotic counter-culture and cross-dressing danced by artist Andrew Logan – comes in its closing movement, as a young Nigerian approaches the organizers. Dismayed for missing the point ("She rang up saying she wanted to represent Nigeria. I said we don't do that"), Miss Nigeria nevertheless arrives a young man with scars on his body from persecution in his homeland. After performing, he's snugged on backstage, told that he was "fabulous" and responds with a wet-eyed beam of gratitude.

It's a testament to Berntson's direction that he's managed to express the irrepressibly heartless heart of his subject while keeping such moments of social commentary a potent minority

Concerned by Logan in 1972 and raising attentiveness ever since, the pageant functions as an open-may bad-taste drug spectacular, sometimes asserting the survival-of-the-fittest body politics of the original Miss World, sometimes veiling for pure, pleasurable strategy.

Contributors and film include Derek Jarman (one-time winner of the event as Miss Gipsy Savers), Brian Eno and David Byrne. Berntson's film traces the 2009 pageant from organization to fruition, blending fly-on-the-wall footage with archive film, cutting heads (including Eno and Jarman) and playing Ghanaian animation that echoes the backstage aesthetic of the pageant.

See-of-the-show Logan is described variously as an Egyptian high priest and a naughty woman, and appears to be an unusual national treasure

a man who turned Andy Warhol's adage on how to achieve commercial success, and a throwback to '60s subversion still boldly offering a wilful space for his patron to peel off their layer of social constraint and wallow in cultic hedonism. If the event is a fiction to charming in Berntson's film, it deserves to move just a little closer to the museum's index. **Christopher Nelson**

Anticipation. Outsider art dressed up! No thank you, darling. **2**

Enjoyment. Oh, go on then. **4**

In Retrospect. How absolutely bloody marvellous. **4**

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68
AN ARTIFICIAL EYE RELEASE
A FILM BY ANDREA ARNOLD
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★★★★★

"An astonishing-looking adaptation"

Robert O'Hara, Empire

★★★★★

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WUTHERING HEIGHTS

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY EMILY BRONTË

WUTHERING HEIGHTS is a cinematic adaptation of the 1847 novel 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Brontë. The film is directed by Andrea Arnold and stars Kaya Scodelario, James Howson, Solomon Glave, and Shannon Beer. The film is a love story set in the Yorkshire moors. It is a beautiful and powerful adaptation of the novel. The film is a masterpiece of British cinema. It is a must-see for anyone who loves literature and film. The film is a work of art. It is a masterpiece of the human spirit. It is a beautiful and powerful adaptation of the novel. The film is a masterpiece of British cinema. It is a must-see for anyone who loves literature and film. The film is a work of art. It is a masterpiece of the human spirit.

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IN CINEMAS NOVEMBER 11



The Deep Blue Sea

Directed by *Terence Davies*

Starring *Rachel Watson, Simon Russell Beale, Tom Middleton*

Released *November 25*

The return to filmmaking of Terence Davies always goes down for celebration.

A figure responsible for some of the finest work in post-war British cinema, Davies' films are remarkable for their symphonic structure and meticulous sense of composition and attention to detail. Physical and emotional endurance, class, restrictive family ties and the destructive effects of religion and other dogmas are recurring thematic concerns. In all these regards, *The Deep Blue Sea* is classic Davies territory and a potent reminder of why he is a director to cherish.

Hester Collier (Rachel Watson) leads a privileged life in 1930s London. The beautiful wife of a politician but doing high-society judge Sir William Collier (Simon Russell Beale), Hester is a married woman at heart - sworn for nothing. To the shock and dismay of those around her, however, Hester walks out on her marriage and life of luxury to move in with a drifting young ex-RAP pilot, Freddie Page (Tom Middleton). Finding herself emotionally stranded and physically isolated, Hester fish Freddie drifting away from her and in an bid to win him back attempts suicide. Succeeding only in estranging herself further, Hester is forced to confront all too brutally the futility of the human heart.

Named after the dilemma of having to make the choice between two equally undesirable suitors, *The Deep Blue Sea* is adapted by Davies from Terence Rattigan's acclaimed play, which initially shocked British theatregoers with its frank exposure of natural instincts about sex and class. An uncompromising study of the fear of loneliness and the frustratingly unobtainable nature of love, the play is now considered Rattigan's crowning achievement.

In the hands of Davies - whose adaptation was endorsed by the Rattigan estate in the centenary year of the dramatist's birth - the story of a destructive love triangle also reflects the state of early 1930s Britain, a country in the throes of post-war recovery, whose sense of power, worth, wealth and identity has been eroded.

Post-war Britain has been very much a real and moving setting for Davies, and here, with an insightful and perceptive emphasis on the position of women in the patriarchal 1930s, there's a clear lineage with 1980's autobiographical landmark *Dances With Wolves, Still Life*.

Stripping away much of Rattigan's exposition and many of the numerous characters that abetted the original production, Davies, a scholarly aficionado of the melodrama, gives contemporary audiences an almost unbearably

moving and audaciously neo-judgmental story about women's love and desire. By extension, the film also looks in a wider sense at the quest frequently frustrated or at best flouted - for individual fulfillment and freedom.

Handlessly designed (the sea and costumes are impeccable) and luminously shot by DP Florian Hoffmeister, *The Deep Blue Sea* is also characteristic of Davies' genius in making exceptional and resonant use of music. A soaring lament, Samuel Barber's "Violin Concerto" gently underscores the emotional soul, alongside the terrific and incredibly subtle performance of Rachel Watson, is one of the film's fundamental and most essential components. **Jovan Wood**

Anticipation. Terence Davies adapts Terence Rattigan. Oh yes

5

Enjoyment. Beautifully written, realized and performed

4

In Retrospect. Deceptive in its depth of emotion, this is filmmaking of the highest order

4

ADRIANO LUZ

MARIA JOÃO BASTOS

RICARDO PEREIRA

CLOTILDE HESME

AFONSO PIMENTEL

LÉA SEYDOUX

"THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF A GREAT DIRECTOR'S CAREER."

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL 2010

"AN EPIC ENTERTAINMENT...
RUIZ'S MOST AMBITIOUS
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Jonathan Romney, SIGHT AND SOUND

"YOU WON'T SEE A MORE
BRILLIANT PIECE OF FILM
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RAVISHING"

John Powers, VOGUE

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A film by RAÚL RUIZ

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KEEPS THE VIEWER GLUED TO THE SCREEN."

Rob Nelson, VARIETY

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Michael Shannon

Perfect Storm

Interview by Adam Woodward

Select Filmography
Michael Shannon

Take Shelter (2011)

The Runaways (2010)

My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done (2009)

Bad Lieutenant (2009)

Revolutionary Road (2008)

Before the Devil Knows You're Dead (2007)

Shotgun Stories (2007)

Rug (2006)

Bad Boys II (2003)

8 Mile (2002)

Vanille Sky (2001)

Pearl Harbor (2000)

Tigerland (2000)

Michael Shannon doesn't do straight. That normal demeanor and those big, force-eyes hardly seem "everyman." In the latter half of this last decade, it's Shannon's raw, understated intensity and ability to act himself (and the audience) to a darker place blink-quick that's seen him into his work with marvelous results and plaudits.

Yet while he's made his name playing men mad on power (*The Runaways*), revenge (*Before the Devil Knows You're Dead*) and just plain mad (*Rug*), *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done*, Shannon isn't about to let any labels stick. "I look for variety, which is probably surprising to hear for some people, because I know some folk think I tend to play the same characters a lot of the time," he says. "But for me, variety is really key. Even if you think I do it to play crazy people, my response would be, 'There's a lot of different types of crazy.'"

"Crazy" in *Take Shelter* takes the form of Curtis LaRocca. He's a hard-working blue-collar family man whose world revolves around his charming wife and cut-and-dry-as-war daughter. He's also suffering from a traumatic, hallucination-inducing mental breakdown. If this is Shannon doing straight, it comes with a major edge.

It's a role you imagine would be hard to shake off once the final spot of 35mm had been used up and the so-packed-down, such is the potency of Curtis' affliction. But taking on the kinds of roles most actors would shy away from is precisely what won Shannon over. "I tend to be drawn to characters that are struggling, really fighting for something," he says. "But a lot to be an actor, nothing too casual."

Shannon is in Vancouver giving his teeth into a different kind of crazy when *MTV* borrows his name to shoot the biopic. He's on a break from filming *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done* when Shannon is about to meet up with Henry Cavill's Kryptonian hero as General Zod. It's a juicy narrative role Shannon says he's relishing, one he adores

was "impossible" to turn down. "He's not a stereotypical villain," explains Shannon. "He doesn't breathe fire or have horns coming out of his skull. He's a general, in the same way that General Patton and General Grant were generals — that's what he is. He's a little more complicated than just a villain."

Despite his enthusiasm for *Man of Steel*, you get the impression that Shannon isn't exactly smitten with the whole blockbuster machine. Doing things on a more personal scale is much more his style. Which brings us back on topic: *Take Shelter* is Shannon's second film in six years with writer/director Jeff Nichols — the first being 2007's *Shotgun Stories*, a dark, atmospheric drama about flooding half-brothers in rural Arkansas and it's provided him with perhaps his most intimate role yet.

The pair met back in 2004, not long after Shannon had completed an Off-Broadway run of *Rug*. "Jeff was just getting out of film school and didn't have a lot of money," recalls Shannon. "He approached me with *Shotgun Stories* in a formal and very sincere way. I read it and I thought, a son one of the most brilliant screenplays I'd ever read in my life and said I'd do it, no matter what the circumstances. I basically did it for free. He put everything he had into making it. I think he spent around three years making it before he eventually got it out there. Afterwards, Jeff became very anxious about what his next move would be."

Both *Shotgun Stories* and *Take Shelter* are about family, about the trials of growing old and the eternal bond of siblinghood. It's the latter, though, that was most deeply informed by events in the lives of his star and director. "As well as having anxiety about his next career move, Jeff was about to be a father for the first time," explains Shannon. "He was starting a family and I was starting a family — I just recently had my first child with my girlfriend." The synchronicity doesn't end there. "And you learn that Curtis' father passed away and my father passed away

recently, too. It's kinda spooky that it happened that way, but I think it shows that the genres of the film come from us both dealing with these very different concerns."

A perfect storm of conflicting emotions gives Curtis' "madness" added resonance. Ultimately, *Take Shelter* is about more than parental schizophrenia — it's a film that explores the way we deal with everyday setbacks, how (if at all) we sit about re-packing ourselves after being shattered by life's cruel, unpredictable blows. As Shannon constructs, "Given with the people you love it can be hard to share yourself completely, because we all keep things bottled up, even from the people closest to us. But I think it's important that we keep more things in our hands. Things can leak in your subconscious, these little seeds of something that Curtis is experiencing. They may lay dormant for years, or even decades, and then all of a sudden they get a little water on them and they start growing."

Whether under the wing of a relative newcomer like Nichols or someone as seasoned as writer Harzog (in he was in 2009 for *My Son, My Son* and *Bad Lieutenant*), Shannon says that he often finds himself profoundly influenced by a director's story. His profile may have been boosted by his Oscar-nominated supporting turn in 2008's *Revolutionary Road* and more recently on HBO's heavily acclaimed *Boardwalk Empire*, but Shannon still clearly treasures smaller projects — a point supported by the fact he's about to start filming *Mad, Mad, Mad*'s 2013-shoot third feature.

Shannon acknowledges his urge to "transform" himself in order to meet a director's vision, even going as far as taking his accent to his location. It's a reach he finds difficult to turn off. "Even when I'm traveling I'll use myself change. I'll come to London and find myself speaking in a British accent all of a sudden, which is ridiculous. It's in my DNA, I guess."

Check out the full transcript online in the week of the film's release.



Take Shelter

Directed by **Jeff Nichols**

Starring **Michael Shannon, Jessica Chastain, Shea Whigham**

Released **November 25**

If the measure of a man were determined by his domestic feats, Curtis LaFordhe (Michael Shannon) would be rubber-stamped "ordinary." In small-town Ohio, he takes shifts at a local drilling firm, bringing home enough bread to keep his wife Samantha (Jessica Chastain) and young daughter Hannah (Dora Swift) clothed and fed. It's a modest existence, but they get by. They're content. Happy.

But a storm is gathering in the distance. Bad storms and blackened heavens become regular sightings in Curtis' daily routine. Worriedly, he seems to be the sole observer of these ominous phenomena. He's about to descend into a personal nightmare that will splinter his whole-pokez ideal with the sudden impact of a lightning bolt.

On the surface, *Take Shelter* finds Shannon occupying a familiar landscape. But as *Shogun* (Shannon) and writer/director Jeff Nichols' 2007 collaboration) proved, first impressions can deceive. Because although Curtis is a man with biblical angst destined to battle the schizophrenic that consumes him comes from an ambiguous need.

Like *Shogun* Storm, we learn that Curtis' father has not long passed away and the

additional absence of his elder brother has thrust him into the patriarchal spotlight. For the first time, he's aware of his own mortality and the weight of his responsibilities. Then, much later, we meet his mother, a shell-like victim of bipolarity. Is Curtis prey to apocalyptic premonitions? Is his affliction hereditary? Or are the storms of madness beginning to rot his mental core?

The fact that *Take Shelter* leaves us with more questions than answers is Nichols' shrewdest move. The confusion of Shannon's performance, allied with the notion that Curtis is fundamentally a good man, ensures we keep the faith that his haze and Spring rains will eventually return. Samantha, though loyal, isn't quite so sure.

Through her weaned and weaned eyes we see the LaFordhe world war painfully towards the point of no return. Like her, we fear that Curtis' impulsive actions may be final. The tormented banker he curves into the neck of his suburban backyard to protect his blood from the End of Days might as well be a hard-punked outlier.

But when motor oil is spit, carhorns from the grey clouds and chirping birds crash around Curtis' head once more, it's impossible to ignore

the sensation that disaster, be it human or natural, is an inescapable force we must all eventually face. Life is fragile. Love is unscapable.

For all its allegorical intrigue, however, Nichols' ornate splicing of genre and mood ultimately dulls his film's impact. The narrative doesn't stand absolute during, it's better for the lack of it, but a touch more metaphorical tact, or at least less repetition, would turn *Take Shelter* from a break gate to a force five. **Adam Woodward**

Anticipation. Won the Critics' Week Grand Prix in Cannes

Enjoyment. Shannon and Chastain are a force to be reckoned with

In retrospect. The supernatural horror/suburban drama mash-up doesn't always sit well, but there's no need to take shelter from the Shannon/Nichols union

Resistance

Directed by **Amir Gupta**
 Starring **Andrea Riseborough,**
Tom Wlaschko, Michael Sheen
 Released **November 25**



Presenting alternative history can be a tricky business. Get it right and the effort can be profound (*Never Let Me Go*, *Darwin's D*). Get it wrong and you could find yourself fighting for scraps with Richard Kelly. First-time director Amir Gupta falls on the former side of the fine margin, but his exponential conviction isn't enough to save his film from straying into softness.

It's 1944, five years since the failed D-Day landings, and the Nazis have reached a remote Welsh village after goose-stepping across the English Channel all the way to Wharfedale. Here, a handful of women tend to their dwindling flocks in later weeks before the harsh landscape with meager devotion.

Their husbands are mysteriously absent, seemingly off mounting a covert counter-revolution - leaving the women under the watchful eye of a group of Wehrmacht soldiers sent to

occupy the region. To begin with, the women's resistance manifests as a collective cold shoulder aimed against their invading aggression.

But as the months pass, the air changes. Sarah (Andrea Riseborough) begins to look beyond the war, recognizing that in order to face the oncoming winter they must pull together. They begin engaging with one another, persecuted at first, but over time hostility and hatred are diluted by pragmatism and the raw will to survive.

From this point, the relationship between the women and soldiers becomes increasingly complex. Captain Albrecht (Tom Wlaschko) grows fond of Sarah - so much so that, in a moment of mistaken trust, he reveals to her the absolute reason for his squadron's prolonged stay in the village. Sarah, while confused, remains unruffled.

Gupta complements Owen Shuter's source novel with a moody palette of historical blues

and Gettyspe greys, accenting the austerity of the mountainscape in which this prison and highly racialized war unfolds. But like its setting, *Resistance* is a cold, bleak film. Riseborough is superb, but an off-kilter-brief Michael Sheen comes underexposed what's missing conflict. **Adam Woodward**

Anticipation. World War II hits Wales **3**

Enjoyment. An accomplished first feature. It's Riseborough who emerges head held highest, though **3**

In Retrospect. Vanishes from view like sheep in the mist **2**

Junkhearts

Directed by **Tinge Krishnan**
 Starring **Eddie Marsan,**
Romola Garai, Candice Redd
 Released **November 4**



Continuing the tradition of downbeat Brit gals in all its glory, gloomy gray, debut director Tinge Krishnan's small but powerful direction of family, addiction, love and loss ticks off with a potent and disquieting sense of foreboding which sets alarm bells ringing from the get-go.

Indeed, from the minute we see Eddie Marsan's distraught and disoriented mug, we know things are going to get much worse before they get any better for these characters. Marcus is Frank, an ex-soldier haunted by a violent past. He lives a life of solitude in his small tower-block London flat, guarding the house in a bid to suppress the painful flashbacks of dark days gone by. On a routine trip to his local off-beats, Frank has a brief run-in with 16-year-old runaway Lynette (Candice Redd), whom he offers to take under his wing.

Initially reluctant and sceptical of the stranger's generosity, the fiery Lynette eventually accepts Frank's kindness and the two tentatively form an unlikely bond. However, when her drug-pushing boyfriend (Tom Stouridge) turns up on the doorstep, Lynette and Frank's lives once again begin to spiral out of control.

Meanwhile, a seemingly unconnected single mother/burlesque dancer, Christine (Romola Garai), is dealing with problems of her own, which include a drug addiction and an affair with a married man. The inevitable downward plunge for all involved provides a fairly depressing experience, but Krishnan keeps us on our toes and treats us with a number of narrative detours that keep you guessing which direction *Junkhearts* will take.

Ultimately, though, the incongruous Romola Garai portions of the film (occasionally whored

down to pretty much nothing) lend to an abrupt, jarringly apocalyptic finale that doesn't sit comfortably with the rest of the film.

Still, with an eye for the stylish and stylised, Krishnan has crafted a moving and captivating drama, and his incredible ensemble cast brings this tale of loneliness and loss to life. **Lee Griffiths**

Anticipation. More doom and gloom on the streets of London. **2**

Enjoyment. Depressing, uncompromising, absorbing and moving **3**

In Retrospect. A gritty, self-revered directorial debut **3**



LastExitToNowhere.com

You better watch out. You better not cry.

Joachim Trier

Tour de Norge

Filmography
Joachim Trier

Oslo, August 31st (2011)

Reprise (2006)

Interview by Adam Woodard

A quick leaf through the history books will tell you that 1955 was a bad year for Europe's cine establishment. Major new voices François Truffaut arrived in Cannes as unknown and lost with the first Brequeau prize, while Alain Resnais' *Hush* was a flop. *Alexander* suffered the *Norfolk* hype as more than merely the director of an unambiguously stormy month on the Côte d'Azur.

By the time the wind settled, the furniture had been rearranged. In the mainstream of the cultural revolt, various contemporaries to *The 400 Blows* and so had been overshadowed. One of them was *The Chalet*, a distinctly unconventional film from a young Norwegian named Edith Løchen.

Despite making waves in his homeland, Løchen's lack of recognition in Cannes and the confidence at large was a haunting blow he never fully recovered from. He made just one more film before turning his back on filmmaking in the mid '70s. To Scandinavian cinema, *The Chalet* remains a watershed release.

Fast forward to May 2011 and another Norwegian has descended the red-carpet of Cannes' Grand Théâtre Lumière for the first time: Joachim Trier – Løchen's grandson. Among the world cinema heavyweights propping up the Un Certain Regard category, Trier looked in danger of belatedly continuing an unfortunate family tradition. But instead of signalling the beginning of the end, *Oslo, August 31st* offered Trier both artistic freedom to hone his style and

Løchen isn't the only cinematic voice in Trier's family: his father worked as a sound designer and his mother was a born documentarian. But while making films is in his blood, the 37-year-old was late to embrace his lineage: "I had an appreciation of cinema from a young age, but I spent most of my time skateboarding," recalls Trier. "I was Norwegian champion a couple of times and my youth involved around doing a lot of skate videos and competitions."

During this formative period, Trier began shooting himself and other skaters, eventually abandoning his first love altogether to focus on his behind the lens. "It was sort of a lifestyle choice to go into filmmaking," he reflects. "I guess I just got tired of the whole skate scene, but I learned a lot from that time, particularly through making videos where you're always looking to shoot the coolest tricks in the best and most interesting way possible."

To complement his vocational U-turn, Trier moved to London to study at the National Film and TV School, returning to Oslo seven years later with a degree, a handful of short films and a mental sketch for what would become his feature debut. Trier's next step was to flesh out his fledgling screenplay with pal and writing partner Eirik Wieg. As for the small matter of scraping together the requisite money to get *Reprise* rolling? Well, Trier's punk disposition took care of that.

Like *Reprise*, *Oslo* is a thinly veiled valentine to Trier's adopted hometown. He was born in Copenhagen, yet the nostalgic ink he writes so fluently in was once a much darker hue. "I used to hate Oslo when I was growing up," he reveals. "I always thought of it as the suburb of Europe where nothing much ever happened." What changed? "After living in London, I understood it, my sense of belonging to it. I guess it's that old thing of having to go away to really find yourself."

"It's a city with a very hidden beauty," he continues. "It's not like Stockholm or Copenhagen, which are very architecturally striking cities. Oslo doesn't have that same kind of superficial beauty, but if you look closely enough it's a really amazing place, especially at the time of year my film is set. I think there's something very beautiful about Scandinavia at the end of summer. It's taken me years and years to realize that."

Trier's *Oslo* is an urban sprawl much like any other. A cosmopolitan space dominated by soaring cranes, distant shores and the

unwilling chance of common people going about their ordinary lives. His protagonists, Anders, is a damaged soul desperate to slip back into something, anything, that resembles normality after a lengthy stint in rehab.

The *Oslo* Anders remains to doesn't know how for his responses he walks in streets and kills time in in parks judgement-free. The people who know him, however, can't help but trust him differently. In a further echo to *Reprise*, *Oslo* evolves into a stark and intimate study of friendship, loyalty and compassion.

"I wanted to really focus on how we attempt to help each other," Trier explains. "Friendships are fragile but people's intentions are fragile also. If you analyze the way that people talk, as I do, it's interesting to see how inconsistent people are. I'm curious about themes that deal with how things either or how things are not steady, how relationships change over time," he continues.

"*Oslo* is a tragic story in many ways, but I think it's important to ask the question how much can you do to help your friends? It's a film about the difficulty of talking to each other. How do we talk? With humor or emotion? It's a complicated thing and I don't feel like I have all the answers."

Despite having made what he regards as a "culturally specific" film, Trier's a global citizen. He recognizes and relies on his own kind in whichever city he visits, be it Oslo, London, Cannes or New York, where he hopes to make his third feature – his first English-language – next summer.

"I don't think people change very much wherever you go. They live quite similar lives, they read the same books, watch the same movies. Taking my films on the road is always fascinating because watching people in different cities makes me realize how much we have in common."

Check out the full transcript online now.



O=lo, August 31st

Directed by Joachim Trier

Starring Anders Danielsen Lie, Andrea Braten, Mona Oler Brenner

Released November 4

Whether it's Ingmar Bergman's cold meditation on death, Lars von

Trier's spare emotional intrigues, the melancholy child vampire or the rascally rape victim, one thing's for sure: it's grown up Norse.

Finally following up his acclaimed 2006 debut *August*, director Joachim Trier returns with a beautiful and uplifting film about drug addiction, depression and existential angst. The Hollywood remake might be a long time coming, but this is the foreboding movie of the year. *Scandinavian style*

Disaffected thirty-something Anders (Anders Danielsen Lie) only has a few weeks left of rehab. Trier follows him over the course of a single day out in the real world to attend a job interview - confronting the people that watched him slip his life apart and dwelling on what the future may or may not hold.

Regrets, missed opportunities and wasted chances are paraded in front of Anders as he drifts through the city he used to know, while Trier's camera focuses as much on the people and places of Oslo as it does on Anders' greatly exploring psyche.

Adapted from Pierre Deino Le Rochelle's 1931 French novel *Le Fils Pâle* (originally filmed in 1943 by Louis Malle as *The Pale*

Wife), the film wears its literary and cinematic influences on its sleeve. Combining Antonioni's architectural eye, Resnais' clean scene tone and Mulick's bold ambience, Trier will manage to give the film a remarkably original voice.

Following random pedestrians in the street and eavesdropping on conversations already overheard in crowded cafes, the camera drifts in and out of Anders' story as the city begins to distance him. Glances stolen across a bar, the sound of music coming from the next room and the feel of an empty motorcycle in the early hours of the morning. Oslo is a portrait of life's seemingly insignificant, yet lightly poetic moments.

Recklessly shifting the tone and mood, Trier isn't afraid to stare in the broken ether. An awkward conversation between old friends and an excruciating job interview play like comic interludes along the otherwise rolling monotonous of Anders' journey. Another scene may be the less compelling for the unexpected change of pace.

Performances are strong across the board from an inexperienced Lie, with Danielsen Lie (his last performance before leaving acting behind to pursue a career in medicine) subtly

conveying as the ghost, distant youth reflecting the smoke of his generation.

Filmed in the golden hours of late summer (as the title suggests), *O=lo, August 31st* is an ode to the city itself. Pivoting the delicate lines of Anders' descent into the labyrinthine urban corners of the town he grew up in, Trier's film is filled with a deep sense of nostalgia that bathes the often bleak tale with unexpected warmth. A film of fine detail on a grand scale, you won't come out humming a happy tune, but you'll certainly 'feel good'. *Paul Brinkshaw*

Anticipation. Anyone who saw *Reprise* has been waiting for Trier's next effort for five long years.

Engagement. A poetry of moments, this is bold, beautiful filmmaking at its most personal and compelling.

In Retrospect. An astounding achievement, Joachim Trier's haunting film will stay with you for weeks.

Camp Hell

Directed by **George Vandewerk**
Starring **Wim Dantón,**
Bruce Davison,
Christopher Denham
Released **December 2**



Arrowing is a Christian fundamentalist summer camp, session Tannoy (W. Dantón) experiences impressions of the flesh courtesy of teen hottie Melissa (Vandewerk de Angelis), receives lectures on virtue from Father Phloxes (Bruce Davison), and gets lessons in non-conformity from the-thinker, Jack (Conner Fucile). He also becomes convinced he's being persecuted by a demon.

Evidence mounts to corroborate this wild theory: The chapel is desecrated. One boy peeps in his roomers when Tannoy lays hands on him during prayer. Strange communal dreams reduce the female campers to hysterics.

What sets writer/director George Vandewerk's quirky, unconventional low-budget debut above and beyond its horror genre is that it's an extremely far-sighted piece of filmmaking. Tannoy's supervisor, Christian (Christopher Denham), is an absurd figure who cautions Spenser comes and lectures the boys on the dangers of flesh meat, but he's also caring and competent in a crisis. Father Phloxes is kindly and compassionate, the sort of preacher who can fill pews with his warm personality. Which makes it all the more shocking when he calls Melissa a whore for stepping outside with Tannoy after dark.

In a sly way, Vandewerk is ironic towards fundamentalist Christian values, but he portrays the holden of such young with sympathy and understanding. The young score all go

sters, natural performances. Denham and de Angelis are touching for their sweetness and vulnerability; Christopher Denham underplays expertly, while Bruce Davison - that over-able Hollywood veteran - glows with conviction as Father Phloxes.

Anyone hoping for a teen pre-list will be disappointed, but lovers of lifelike cinema should definitely have this film on their radar.

Unsettling, unpredictable and often charming, *Camp Hell* has the makings of a minor cult classic. **Julian White**

Anticipation. At a glance, seems like another teenie-cutter horror on the *Friday the 13th* mould.

3

Enjoyment. An unexpected and individual take on sex and the devil by a director who - shock horror - actually has something to say.

4

In Retrospect. Fine performances, a thoughtful script and a minority of directional insight make *Camp Hell* head and shoulders above most films with 'Hell' in the title.

4

Tabloid

Directed by **Royal Morris**
Starring **Joyce McKinney,**
Kurt Gawn, **Peter Torv**
Released **November 11**



This extraordinary documentary from Royal Morris couldn't be more timely, as Amanda Knox and 'Hugoboss' dominate the year's headlines. But it's not the relevance of *Tabloid* that makes it so revelatory, it's the star-tingled made-for-TV-drama of Miss Joyce McKinney.

In 1977, a Mormon missionary went wrong in southern England. He surfaced several days later alleging that McKinney - a former girlfriend and one-time Miss Wyoming - had seduced and raped him. What followed was a Wild West wildcat frenzy, in which McKinney was chewed up and spit out by the British press.

At the core of the row were *The Daily Mirror* and *The Express*, occupying either side of a basic line drawn up by McKinney herself as the woad and lured to play the system. With photographers dispatched to LA to dig for dirt

(and finding nothing), the scandal soon morphed into a dark force.

The selection story is told in detail by a mixture of friends, players and unrepentant hacks. But it's Joyce always Joyce - who owns the show. A natural narrator, she plays the emotional register like a gifted musician: tears, laughter, self-pity and go-shit chaos spinning together. She's the most heartwrenchingly unreliable narrator since Kayser Stutz.

Morris has some tricks - including a snarly habit of lucrally spelling out some of the sadder claims in bold type across the screen. But he's also got a point to make. The hacks may maintain a distancing distance from their work - it's what allows them to treat people as playthings and lives as fodder. But there are always consequences. From the outside, the

tabloid wars might look like a game, but if it is, it's a blood sport. **Max Douchaud**

Anticipation. With memories of *News of the World* and Amanda Knox still fresh, *Tabloid* could hardly be better timed.

3

Enjoyment. Enormously entertaining but with a serious point to make.

3

In Retrospect. McKinney is no Robert McNamara, but there are lessons to be learned from this fog of silence.

3



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Moneyball

Directed by **Bennett Miller**

Starring **Brad Pitt, Jonah Hill, Philip Seymour Hoffman**

Released **November 23**

Is there anything more American than baseball? Along with apple pie, root beer and capital punishment, a good old-fashioned ball game is enough to bring tears to the eyes of any freedom-loving Yank. For us Brits, though, those tears are likely to be shed in boredom. Luckily, *Moneyball*'s "about" baseball in the same way that *The Social Network*—with which it shares a certain screenwriter—is about web development. Even if you don't know a fly ball from a curve ball, this is a gripping drama, both for its classic underdog-makes-good story and also for what it has to say about modern America.

Based on Michael Lewis' bestseller, *Moneyball* tells the real-life story of how Major League Baseball team the Oakland A's upset the game's odds in the 2001-02 season. Framed as how early the MLB's big franchise owners (in mid-size towns, the A's general manager, Billy Beane [Brad Pitt], hires young, money-oriented economist Peter Brand [Jonah Hill] to rethink the team's approach to the game. Using statistical models, the pair identify undervalued players with overlooked strengths and put together an underdog team (an "island of mavericks," Brand calls them) to compete with their moneyed rivals.

The film's production team was almost as difficult to put together. Screen Soderbergh originally planned to make it as a documentary, but was replaced by *Capote* director Bennett Miller after producers decided it would work better as a drama. Aaron Sorkin was then hired to re-write Steven Zaillian's original script. To use a baseball term, that was a good trade. With its witful, numbers-based premise, *Moneyball* could have been extremely dry. But in Sorkin's hands, it becomes a sports-based companion piece to *The Social Network*.

Just as that film used Facebook to narrate on friendship and the nature of creativity, so *Moneyball* uses baseball to tell a story of innovation, leadership and American capitalism in the twenty-first century. Beane becomes a symbol of the underdog fighting giants, a middle-aged man desperate to turn back the years and stand toe-to-toe with opponents who consider him a spent force.

Drawing upon his movie-star charisma to give Beane an intimidating, Type-A manner, producer/star Pitt probably shades a with grief palpation as his players begin showing their worth. It's a subtle, human performance that makes up there with his finest.

Christopher Nolan's regular cinematographer Wally Pfister elevates the film with some startlingly beautiful images—a Sorkin and Saper slowly being unrolled on a freshly mowed patch; a baseball striding over stadium lights into a catcher's mitt—while Miller guides us through the narrative twists and statistical cut-throats of the story with dexterity.

But Sorkin's contribution is the key to the movie's success, using the classic narrative arc of the sports drama to paint America's National Pastime in muted reds, whites and blues. It's the best film about statistics you've ever likely to see. **Dan Stewart**

Anticipation. Stillhouse and baseball? Might runcheck this one.

2

Enjoyment. Sorkin and Pitt smash it out of the park.

5

In retrospect. A seasoned, mature picture right out of left field.

4

We Were Here

Directed by **David Weissman,**
Bill Weber
Starring **Ed Wolf, Paul Boneberg,**
Daniel Goldstein
Released **November 23**



One of the best documentaries to take a detailed look at the emergence and impact of AIDS, *David Weissman* and *Bill Weber's* challenging film serves as a reflective account of the arrival of the disease in San Francisco's gay community in the 1970s. Using a combination of interviews and archive imagery, *We Were Here* chronicles the rise of the epidemic from its roots as an unknown virus, erroneously referred to as 'gay cancer', to its status today where, though prevalent, it has become treatable.

Focusing on the experiences of five individuals, all of whom lived in San Francisco prior to and during the epidemic, each recounts personal and often deeply upsetting tales of their encounters with the disease. Though only one is afflicted with the disease, they are all victims in their own way.

Their reasons for sharing are intensely personal. "None of my friends are around from the beginning," explains Daniel Goldstein, who is HIV-positive. "I want to tell their story as much as I want to tell my story." He lost two partners to the disease and considered suicide, an account that is no doubt applicable to many who lived through the epidemic and have learnt to cope with the aftermath.

Keen to emphasize the point that the gay community did not so ally by as the disease spread, the filmmakers and their interviewees shine a light on those areas in a way that mainstream media has rarely achieved. This is the story of a community that came together in the face of a devastating event, working tirelessly to curb the effects of an uncontrollable outbreak that was taking their friends and families.

We Were Here is a fitting tribute not only to those who lost their lives to the illness but also to those who selflessly gave their time and compassion to help others. The end result is an honest, frank and often moving documentary. **Paul Wernick**

Anticipation. In-depth analysis of an event often skirted over in mainstream media. **3**

Engagement. Insightful, honest and moving. **3**

In Retrospect. An eye-opening piece of cinema. Compulsive viewing. **3**

Tower Heist

Directed by **Brett Ratner**
Starring **Ben Stiller,**
Eddie Murphy, Tea Leoni
Released **November 2**



With *Tower Heist*, Brett Ratner returns to the yuck-and-chuck styling of *Black Heist*, bringing it to bear on an unimpressive crime-caper narrative which roughly succeeds in rehabilitating Eddie Murphy post-Norris but fails in almost every other aspect.

Ben Stiller revisits the underestimating everyman persona seen in *Night at the Museum* as the jobsworth building manager of high-class high-rise *The Tower*. Stiller is the counterpart to Alan Alda's sardonic penthouse dweller. When Alda is accused for some unnamed financial crime, and the service staff's pensions are declared MIA (ding ding! Is that the superficial social-commentary bell?), Stiller decides to assemble a hilariously inept crack team, break into Alda's penthouse and steal his hidden millions. Hilarity - ahem - ensues.

Wesley Ted Gifford (*Marathon Man*) and Jeff Nathanson (*Men in Black III*) admirably hit the mark with a handful of choice lines,

mostly uttered by Matthew Broderick, one of the few cast members who surprises. Other commendations go to Tea Leoni, who drops some laughs from a drunk scene that she has any right to before vividly losing patience with the numb-skulled plot. And Murphy's Thaddeus Place-style moonmouth crier also has most of the notes, if not necessarily in the right order.

But the caper narrative is scabious, flailing in the second act with several lame plot developments and some confusing editing before completely abandoning credibility and resorting to a checklist of tired tropes: there's domestic shogling from high-rise windows, hit-apprehending (dubious)-poling-with-heroes-on-top suspense, and a completely unnecessary on-speeding-through-traffic sequence.

The biggest calamity, however, is Ratner's portrayal of *The Tower's* service staff, his betrayed working class, who appear to

enjoy universally harmonious interpersonal relationships and flawless ethical codes. As if it wouldn't be possible to sympathize with working men and women robbed of their pensions if they didn't all get along all the time, harping about their different shenanigans like a collection of snuff-level stand-ups. This is Titanic syndrome: sure, they're poor, but look how much fun they're having below deck! **Christopher Neill**

Anticipation. Ratner crime-comedy? It'll be rubbish. **2**

Engagement. Oh look, it's rubbish. **2**

In Retrospect. Yep, that was rubbish alright. **2**

Las Acacias

Directed by **Pablo Giorgelli**
 Starring **Germán de Silanes**,
Hebe Duarte,
Nayra Calle Mamani
 Released **December 2**



Truck driver Rubén (Germán de Silanes) leads a self-contained life. The first few minutes of *Las Acacias* document his solitary progress through a day's labor. Director Pablo Giorgelli shows him in atmospheric night angles within his cab, revealing little sense that Rubén possesses any life beyond his one on the road.

But Rubén has agreed to carry a passenger, Jacinta (Hebe Duarte), on his return trip from Paraguay to Argentina. She wants to cross the border in search of work, and in bringing her three-month-old baby with her, Rubén is unprepared. No one told him about a baby. He agrees to take them, maybe to keep his end of the deal or maybe because he's fundamentally decent.

He gives them gruffly, rudely even, and doesn't help the overloaded Jacinta into the truck, despite the fact that she's carrying her whole life in an array of pathetic-looking holdalls.

The baby looks horribly vulnerable next to Rubén's enormous truck and the heavy industrial load of logs he transports. A lovely visual metaphor is created with shots of the heavy load sitting right behind Rubén and Jacinta—they're both followed by an oppressive

enormous weight. Jacinta is just as much of a closed book as Rubén. His intense questions about the whereabouts of the baby's father are met with silence.

Gradually, these two damaged people open up to each other, culminating in an affecting scene in which Rubén drops Jacinta off and argues over whether to ask if he can see her again. For a moment, a look of hopefulness lights up his face. Giorgelli leaves the ending open, allowing us to decide for ourselves whether Rubén and Jacinta will ever find happiness. **Orels Camarero**

Anticipation. A Camera d'Or award at Cannes promises an interesting watch

4

Enjoyment. A nuanced tale about two damaged people played by two brilliant actors

3

In Retrospect. Fantastic performances that stay with you and a director who isn't afraid to let you think for yourself

3

An African Election

Directed by **Jørnuth J. Mera**,
Kevin Mera
 Released **November 23**



Boldly disingenuous: political parties, colorful charisma, dodgy rhetoric, corruption and fake smiles. It must be election time again. Although this might sound like a familiar scenario, my comparisons with British or US politics are purely coincidental. This is the lead-up to the 2008 Ghanaian democratic elections, during which filmmaker Joseph and Kevin Mera were behind the scenes to document the political to-ing and fro-ing of the leading parties and the battle for domination that ensued.

With a solidly structured approach to the very slippery subject of democracy, *An African Election* rises on the natural build-up of tension and anticipation in the lead up to the electoral contest. The New People's Party has been in office for eight years, and the National Democratic Congress, the more left-leaning opposition, work to knock it off its perch. On the streets and in the workplace, Ghanaians put more jobs, greater access to healthcare and education, and increased food production. Each party is willing to promise whatever it takes to convince the population to put the N next to them on the ballot paper.

The cameras have assembled a vibrant cast for this anatomy of an election, from the two opposition leaders themselves to academics, journalists, party reps and everyday folk. As the big day approaches, tensions start to mount between the parties and their supporters, with increasing

and violence on the roads. This is when *An African Election*, which at points can be a bit saggy, really starts to up the ante and draw you in.

When a person is willing to stand in line for 12 hours to vote in a process underplayed by controversy, it's hard not to root for them. Real democracy would and progress not only in Ghana, but Africa as a whole. Although it can be a bit heavy-handed at times, this is a well-balanced and carefully constructed window onto a world that's struggling to improve itself. **Leana Borrelli**

Anticipation. Good festival buzz for a doc that promises an insider's view

3

Enjoyment. Great access to a wide range of key players, but the drop in pace makes for a slow mid-section before the election itself ramps up the tension

3

In Retrospect. Timely and balanced, this is a great insight into an otherwise closed process. But would it be more at home on TV?

3

'A TOTAL DELIGHT' THE GUARDIAN 'LANGHAM
SHOWS US WHAT WE'VE BEEN MISSING' THE
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Wuthering Heights

Directed by **Andrea Arnold**
Starring **Sofia Hogg, Shannyn Sossamon, Kaya Scodelario**
Released **November 11**



Fish Tank director **Andrea Arnold** isn't the most obvious choice for a new adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë's routinely assigned nineteenth-century novel. But by breaking away from the staid look of Laurence Olivier's 1939 edition, Arnold returns *Heights* to its giddy, weird roots.

Confidently making Brontë's story her own, Arnold's film is at once a modernization (her characters lack F-flames and C-genders that would have made the author herself blush), a respectful adaptation and a gutsy reimagining.

If Brontë evoked the barren Yorkshire moors as a representation of sexual character, Heathcliff's sexually wild nature, Arnold takes the metaphor one step further by making the traditionally white role snow. Here, Heathcliff (Sofia Hogg) is a young black boy who's dragged in from the moors ("It was the Christian thing to do") and befriends twin sisters Catherine

(Shannyn Sossamon) But with Catherine's brother Hindley (Lee Shaw) crippled by polio, rage, Heathcliff's in for a rough time.

Musical and visually dialogue-free, Arnold's film relies on look-alike images and meaningful glances for its impact. Fused in a loose, handmade fashion, *Heights* is best in its superior first half when it captures the coarse beauty of the Yorkshire moors with an impressive cast of young first-timers, all of whom deliver raw, unadorned turns that pulse with feeling.

Despite her exceptional players, there's no question who Arnold thinks the real star is. The divorcee is at one with her carbide Yorkshire landscapes and embraces the darkness shown to a look. While the rim-lit night imagery kindles a luxuriant first mood, her repetitive use of certain images denies any sense of grace. At times, *Heights* easily resembles a David Aukeshrough documentary.

Something is respected more than enjoyed, *Heights* is too long by a good 30 minutes (its second half struggles to be Brontë's moorland beast) and would have picked more punch with a little careful pruning. **Josh Winkler**

Anticipation. Andrea Arnold skips from kitchen-sink drama to period tragedy. Intriguing **4**

Enjoyment. Passionate and faithful, Arnold's film is striking but sluggish toward a lethargic climax. **3**

In Retrospect. A study of an entirely successful interpretation of Brontë's tome. **3**

Romantics Anonymous

Directed by **Jean-Pierre Améris**
Starring **Benoît Poelvoorde, Isabelle Carré, Loretta Grogg**
Released **December 2**



Jean-Pierre Améris' slight, comical comedy may take after François Ozon's *Roselle* in both style and tone, but its machine-drawn won't scare anyone's misanthrope.

Chocolate-factory owner Jean-René (Benoît Poelvoorde) business and reputation are melting faster than larders in a furnace. The problem is that his devoted team of chocolatiers simply won't up to scratch. But he's about to be shown a glimpse in the beguiling form of Angélique (Isabelle Carré).

Despite being a natural comic when Angélique comes forward as a sales rep with bright ideas for winning some cash back into Jean-René's floundering venture. Which she does, without much fuss, after convincing her boss to fast-track a new signature chocolate production. Secretly, Jean-René is seeking a life partner, but he's too awkward to make a move and Angélique is too shy to signal her reciprocal affection.

As Améris hones the will-they-won't-they subplot, *Romantics Anonymous* takes a bland turn. For a director known for delivering hyper-emotional drama, it's surprising that he gives Carré and Poelvoorde so little to work

with. Thankfully, his lead pair give Améris' blather, flailing out their catty dust with a tender chemistry. Still, there's about as much depth here as a box of Milk Tray, and without the skyline romance of an *Améris* or Ozon's aforementioned delight, it simply doesn't have enough going for it to make you want to go back for more.

Romantics Anonymous does exactly what it says on its ribbon-bound tin and, at a trim 80 minutes, it's as short and sweet as a slice of Gallic romance as you could hope to come across. **Adam Woodward**

Anticipation. Life is sweet **3**

Enjoyment. A sugar-coated change of tack from an under-rated filmmaker. Won't win Améris many new fans, though **3**

In Retrospect. Those who like their French cinema sans schmaltz will have to look elsewhere **3**



50/50

Directed by **Jonathan Levine**

Starring **Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Seth Rogen, Anna Kendrick**

Released **November 25**

W if Reiner was in his early twenties and working as a writer on *Do the G Show* when he was diagnosed with cancer 50/50 in his caffeine, semi-fictionalized and very funny account of the experience, written under the stewardship of exec producers Irena Goldfarb and Seth Rogen. But if their influence can be felt in the film's unexpected and generous laughs, it's also there in its failure to minimize that humor with humane drama.

That's not to say 50/50 isn't an emotional ride, with Joseph Gordon-Levitt staring soulfully into the middle distance as Adam, a rail-thin, punny-whipped neurotic who, to his shock and horror ("I don't drink, I don't smoke, I freak"), is diagnosed with the Big C.

His journey through the grueling stages of chemo, hair loss, grief, despair and repudiation is never less than compelling and it is aided by director Jonathan Levine with a devil-may-care brio that upends the fine line between comedy and tragedy.

But there are two different films here — or at least two separate units — moving as parallel without ever actually cohering. The film is an unabashed biographical comedy in which Seth Rogen takes center stage as Adam's best mate

Kyle, who refuses to see his friend as a victim and instead uses Adam's cancer as the perfect excuse to let on gain. And so Rogen gets all the juicy lines, giving full voice to that shaggy charisma and shamelessly sizzling score after score until, eventually, you realize he's just mugged the entire film.

With Rogen off screen, that second film is allowed to emerge and it turns out to be as often quite touching if somewhat uneven cancer drama that has all the usual movie beats (girlfriend who can't take the pressure, therapist infling for patients, pop music as an emotional crutch), but nevertheless manages to introduce a note of quiet tenderness in the final third.

Credit for that goes in large part to Anjelica Huston, who really adds the delicate mixture of poise, warmth and vulnerability needed to tie the script's disparate parts together. Mother to a cancer patient and wife of an Alzheimer's sufferer, Dume is the subject of the film's shapeliest observation but also its most sympathetic moment. And while Anna Kendrick's turn as a young therapist is bogged down by cliché, at least it offers her the opportunity to display a smile

that slips effortlessly from brittle to daring and back again.

Indeed, Adam — with his shaved head and hollow eyes — is the only character who isn't hiding behind a mask, whether it's bloky hedonism, professional concern or parental strength. 50/50's mask is a patchwork of stylized do-no, Rockhead and inorganic gaps designed to convince you that it's anything but a out-of-the-mid drama. And yet, weirdly, despite all the posturing and posturing, the film's conventional moments are actually as best. **Max Rothenki**

Anticipation. Sounds tough but original. Not sure if this can really work.

3

Enjoyment. Big laughs and small dramas. Heavy touch and light impact.

3

In Retrospect. It's not a major landmark on anybody's résumé, but it's nothing to be ashamed of either.

3

We Have a Pope

Directed by **Nanni Moretti**
Starring **Michael Piccoli**,
Nanni Moretti, **Jerzy Stuhr**
Released **December 2**



After the death of the Pontiff, Rome's senior cardinal gathers in the Sistine Chapel to elect a new divine chief. Much puffing and deliberating later, the ballot opens on the name of Cardinal Melville (Michael Piccoli), much to the surprise of his hallowed peers.

With *St Peter's Square* about (director Nanni Moretti recycled footage from John Paul II's memorial service), all eyes are on the man of the hour to step forward, slip on the white zucchetto and give his inaugural address to the masses.

But when the moment arrives, Melville is nowhere to be found. Overwhelmed by the gravity of the occasion, he's find the Vatican, donning crowns to that his way soul-search in place. Meanwhile, the remaining cardinals call in a shrink (played with drill charm by Moretti) to talk Melville around, believing he's simply reticent to his quarters.

Pure and degenerate comedy are hardly obvious foundations for a mainstream comedy, but *We Have a Pope* is just that. Moretti has taken on Italian exorcisms before, naming Berlusconi in 2006's *The Grasses*, but he's more diplomatic here. The Church is depicted with respect, so much so that Moretti gra-

wesly with imagining the greatest banks that occur behind closed convalesces—most notably an inspired compared valleyball scene.

The longer it goes on, however, the more apparent it becomes that this isn't a film about religion at all. Melville is first and foremost a man beset with a sense of melancholy brought on by a monumental life decision. He is elevated but ultimately universal. What a pity Moretti lays on the laughs a little too thick. **Adam Woodward**

Anticipation. Parenthetical or contraband, Moretti is always worth paying attention to. **3**

Enjoyment. Whether you're an ardent or Opus Dei disciple, *We Have a Pope* is playful, unpretentious fun. But it's the sparse dramatic moments that linger. **3**

In Retrospect. Lighthearted and lightweight. Is Moretti beginning to lose his bite? **2**

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan

Directed by **Wayne Wang**
Starring **Bingbing Li**,
Guomei Jun, **Fritson Wu**
Released **November 11**



A shamelessly deviant interpretation of Chinese-American author Lisa See's novel of the same name, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* is a predictable and overly Westernized take on Chinese culture, focusing on the age-long friendship of two pairs of women across two different points in time.

In the nineteenth century, two young girls in Hunan province are paired together as *Lao Dong* ("Old-Sister"), a ceremonial commitment that ties them in an eternal bond of friendship. Isolated by their families, they begin to communicate with one another by writing between the folds of a white silk fan, maintaining over the course of their lives a close relationship as spies of their cultural differences, which grow even greater with the passing of time.

But that's where the resemblance to See's source material ends, as Wayne Wang's film unspectacularly works its painful story focusing on the discordance

of the two girls in present-day Shanghai. Like their ancestors, the friends struggle to maintain the secrecy of their own childhood friendships in the face of the demands posed by their careers and love lives, and the duo must draw on the experience of their forebears to avoid losing out to their lover.

If nothing else, this lion-tailed present-day timeline shows a complete lack of faith in the audience to absorb a period-set drama, holding viewers in contempt as such are paradoxically clobber the other. It's an approach clearly intended to evoke an emotional response, but the film's soring excursion diminishes any impact as it switches back and forth between the centuries for no discernible narrative purpose.

The characters also seem deadlocked unless, haplessly switching between Mandarin and English as if seeking to reassure a mainstream audience that they haven't stumbled into an

archaic parable. The end result plays out like a confused, albeit good-looking, soap opera—brist of imagination but loaded with cheap shots at emotional poignancy. **Paul Wood**

Anticipation. Another rapid period drama—one produced by Mrs. Rupert Murdoch, no less. **2**

Enjoyment. Overlong and devoid of any real emotional substance. **2**

In Retrospect. Visual flourishes aren't enough to distract from a confused plot and mawkishly sentimental overtones. **1**

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The Human Centipede II

Directed by **Tom Six**

Starring **Lawrence R. Harvey, Ashlyn Yennie, Vinessa Bridson**

Released **November 4**

If Peter Kafka's 1995 novella *The Human Centipede* begins with Grigor Samra seeking from troubled dreams to find himself transformed into a monstrous bug, then Tom Six's *The Human Centipede II (Full Sequence)* comes with a decidedly Kafkaesque pedigree. For its protagonist, Martin (Lawrence R. Harvey), it also unfolds by dream — mostly involving the father who abused him usually as a child. And while it is his many brutally abducted captives, rather than himself, who will be transformed into the crime of the tale, his own distinctive manner, wily-goly pursuit and bulbous eyes all lend him the delicate appearance of an insect.

Soon Martin will also become the worst that natured *The* arboreal, mutually challenged, sexually confused currupt attendants were repeatedly sodomized by his father (now in prison). He's subjected to constant psychological abuse by his ungrateful mother (Vinessa Bridson). He's crushed amorously by his creepy doctor (Bill Hushon). He's beaten bloody by his noisy upstairs neighbor (Lee Nicholas Harris). And he's abused by just about everyone that he encounters at his workplace. But then blinding victim also harbors his own scorching tale fantasy of revenge, empowerment and perverse gratification.

Inspired by the film *The Human Centipede*, which he watches with the alarming obsession of a true fanboy, Martin hopes to bring to fruition Dr. Hushon's dream of creating the Yell sequence of 12 human segments joined mouth to anus — and

so he sets about violently collecting subjects, even luring the actress Ashlyn Yennie (who played the original's final girl) over to London. Yet Martin lacks both the surgical skills and the sexual indifference of Hushon, ensuring that this homage will be improved with DIY measures.

The BBFC mostly refused Six's film a classification, curtailing its reputation as the be-all and end-all of offensiveness. Yet now, shown of "just" two minutes and 37 seconds, the film has been granted an 18 certificate on appeal, rather before the censoring body's original claim that "unacceptable content runs throughout the work" so that "you are not a viable option."

These 12 cuts have been rescued for more closely than Martin's hunches of his victims' ligaments, teeth, cheeks and buttocks, so that the final product looks scumier and scumier coherent. It's also no more likely to corrupt or depress than any number of other horror films with the same rating.

Yet those expecting a *Saw*-style sequel may be in for a surprise. For a start, *The Human Centipede II* is often very funny, as Six allows a subversive strain of dark humor to seethe through his narrative, rooted in the true, Kasten-esque performance of the wonderfully grotesque Harvey. The film is also unexpectedly aural — its over-the-top sound design, elegantly spatial music-on-act and curiously oppressive domestic scenes recall *Exorcism* or *Red Bay Baby* more than your average torture porn.

Better still, in postmodern relation to *The Human Centipede* (*Four Sequences*) constantly calls into question whether Martin's madness is a product of his upbringing and environment or of his taste in movies. It's almost as though Six has pre-empted, dramatized and trained the kind of viewer response that would see his film nearly banned.

It remains unclear whether we have been watching real depravity, a nightmare on a damaged brain or just the sort of aberrant fantasy that film-watching can inspire in us all. And so, in this tale of bizarre entrapment, where victimhood is passed down an arbitrarily hereditary chain like waste down a digestive tract, the spurs of Kafka reign — and every one of us is on trial. **Aaron Bial**

Anticipation. So wrong it's right? Or just plain wrong?

3

Enjoyment. A heady blend of the stupid and the sophisticated, the weird and the surreal (Unnecessarily) funny, too

4

In Retrospect. If anyone can squirm to Six's sick joke — even if the punchline is fast forgotten

3



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CLINICAL RESEARCH





Weekend

Directed by **Andrew Haigh**
 Starring **Rice Cadoret, Chris New, Jonathan Rice**
 Released **November 4**

Powered by refreshing honesty and two remarkably naturalistic performances, Andrew Haigh's intimate drama follows two gay men who form an unexpectedly close relationship following what is rumored to be a one-night stand. While *Weekend* focuses on the contemporary gay experience, its observations about the awkwardness associated with forging new relationships are universal. The infrequent but often brutally graphic sexual imagery may appear confrontational, but this is arguably Haigh's intention given that the film effectively rallies against heteronormative attitudes to homosexuality in mainstream culture. The end result is a work that provides an intimate depiction of gay life that admirably avoids the pitfalls of dated stereotypes to tell an emotional and believable love story. **Paul Wenbin 3.5**



The Rum Diary

Directed by **Bruce Robinson**
 Starring **Johnny Depp, Aaron Eckhart, Amber Heard**
 Released **November 11**

There was always the worry that this passion project – produced by Johnny Depp, written and directed by an ‘out of retirement’ Bruce Robinson – might sizzle but not inspire. Thankfully, the genre is all good. Though Hunter S. Thompson didn’t live to see his decade of *The Sun Also Rises* or *Vincent & the Doctor* brought to life, Depp is sure ‘he’d be whooping’ with a tale that celebrates his unique voice. Compared to his drug-addled escapades, Depp’s Kemp is the straight man around whom the action revolves in this tale of a novelist with writer’s block blagging his way in as a hack. The casual setting and period dressing for this \$45 million adaptation are surprising, but in Kemp’s refreshingly (Michael Rooker) grunts, “This place is like someone you fucked and they’re still under ya!” **Dan Brightmore 3.4**



The Silence

Directed by **Bassam Be Odia**
 Starring **Ulrich Theussner, Wotan Wilke Möhring, Sebastian Blomberg**
 Released **October 28**

Twenty-three years ago, a young girl was raped, murdered and left in a wheat field. Now another young girl has been found dead in exactly the same place as that unsolved crime. As the case opens up old wounds for some and new ones for others, a detective is determined to connect the two murders. *The Silence* weaves together a methodical and meticulous crime thriller under the guise of a character-driven melodrama. Less about the ‘who?’ behind the crime and more about the ‘what now?’, Swiss writer/director Bassem Be Odia’s film delves into the lives of those who have been affected. From the shell-shocked widower detective to the murderers themselves, *The Silence* is filled to the brim with complex and memorable characters, which helps make Odia’s debut a smart and emotionally driven crime drama. **Lee Griffiths 4.3**



Surviving Life

Directed by **Jan Světláček**
 Starring **Hilke Holms, Klára Isaková, Zuzana Rohnová**
 Released **December 2**

To say that *Surviving Life* is unconventional would be something of an understatement, but few would expect anything less from Jan Světláček. A self-styled ‘psychoanalytical comedy’, it’s a typically mischievous undercurrent from the legendary Czech screenwriter in which, using his trademark combination of cut-out animation and live-action filmmaking, he focuses on the absurd nature of existence. Opening with a mock confession expressing regret that what was originally conceived as a conventional film has turned out “a poor, imperfect substitute for a live-action film”, what follows is a surreal, often baffling but nevertheless genuinely funny examination of the contradictions of psychoanalysis. With its visually stunning imagery, it’s a stark reminder of Světláček’s longy genius and the welcome return of a master in his field. **Paul Wenbin 4.4**



Snowtown

Directed by Justin Kurzel

Starring *Lance Pataway, Daniel Henshall, Bob Adenese*

Released November 17

After being sexually abused by a local child molester, 16-year-old James Fawcett (Lance Pataway) is taken under the wing of John Bunting (Daniel Henshall), a rent whose authoritarian views on sex offenders resonate with much of the community. Bunting's warped conviction appears to offer a solution to James's problems, but before long he's inescapably drawn into a malicious world of bigotry, self-righteousness and murder. The account carried out by Bunting's gang between 1982 and 1994 remains Australia's worst serial killings. As a result, Justin Kurzel's debut feature reflects a deeply unsettling portrait of one of the darkest chapters in the country's history, which, from the crimes, often looks in terms of a reprieve from its bleak outlook. *Snowtown's* looming threat of violence is interesting, eventually leading to a disturbing climax that makes for extremely distressing viewing. **Paul Whelan 2.5**



Anonymous

Directed by Roland Emmerich

Starring *Rhys Ifans, Benedict Wong, Ruby Richardson*

Released October 28

Roland Emmerich's film plays on that heavy old theory that Shakespeare was a fraud. *Anonymous* presents the Earl of Oxford (Rhys Ifans) as the true author of the plays, Shakespeare himself (Benedict Wong) is a drunken and illiterate buffoon. The "anti-Shakespearean" argument has a long history, but this silly film does as adherents few favour, spinning as it does a preposterous tale of political conspiracy that has the young Elizabeth I (Ruby Richardson) bearing Oxford's illegitimate child, whose claim to the throne is passed obliquely by the pseudonymous dramatist. All this would mean much if the film were remotely entertaining. It isn't. Notwithstanding a sturdy turn from Vanessa Redgrave as the elderly Gloriana, *Anonymous* is hampered by its own earnestness. You're left looking for the sort of highpoints of youth displaced in John Madden's far superior *Shakespeare in Love*. **David Erwin 3.1**



Magic Trip

Directed by Alex Gibney, Alison Ellwood

Starring *Stanley Tucci*

Released November 18

Extremely a collage of footage shot by author Ken Kesey during one of his many psychedelic excursions across America with Neal Cassady and their band of Merry Pranksters in the mid-1960s, *Magic Trip* serves as a fitting homage to an era memorialized by its legendary drug culture. On their travels over the years, Kesey and his friends amassed hours of footage which until now had remained unedited and largely forgotten about. Pieced together for the first time by directors Alex Gibney and Alison Ellwood, these reels are meticulously reconstructed to provide a vision of America all but lost to the passing of time. Mixed with a combination of archive material, radio interviews and audio recordings, today Kesey's images take on a whole new meaning, forming a vivid picture of 1960s drug-addled America. **Paul Whelan 4.3**



Demons Never Die

Directed by Ayman Rous

Starring *Robert Sheehan, Jennie Jacques, Ashley Walters*

Released October 28

With a brilliant opening tracking shot, that recalls *Demon Dash's* "Hard Over Hills" school sequence, debut filmmaker Ayman Rous stylishly sets up a group of schoolkids - including *Mafia's* Robert Sheehan as a *Twilio*-esque loner, *Mollyhairs'* Emma Rigby as a bulimic model, and *Shy's* Jason Munn as a wide-boy outsider - who find themselves walked 'n' ditched by a masked killer. Truth be told, *Demons Never Die* never gets that good again. But if it's not intense or scary enough to suit, at least the boys, Rous's film horror struggles to match budget to the max with a ton of sublimos. From the pre-credits *Scream* prologue to the night-vision shaky-cam finale, Rous goes on a whole-top row of slasher replays while his talented young ensemble find moments of truthfulness in their schoolyard stereotypes. Lots of promise. **Jonathan Croker 3.3**



CHAPTER FIVE
in which we
EXPLORE
the
MESMERISING
MINUTIAE
of
MOVIE
CULTURE



THE

Back Section

38

Our yearly send off, send up and sod off
to cinema's great, good and godawful.

-MAN-
DOWN
SPECIAL



Edited by Adam Lee Davies & Paul Patriclough
Illustrations By Lauren Gentry

Sidney Lumet

June 25, 1924 - April 9, 2011

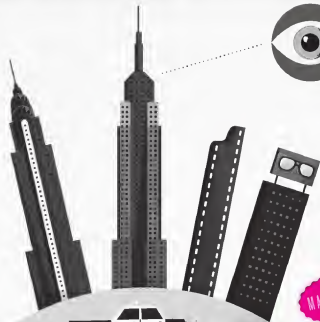
OBITUARIES

When last its barest biographer this year, whereas Woody Allen paints New York in various shades of burgundy and corduroy, and Marty elsewhere on the Italian shore, Lumet etched the city as grit and grime and beery, bleary washed-out lives lived out close to the rustled core of the Big Apple. From the searing crucible of *Dog Day Afternoon* to the insane summertime bounce of *The War* and the wintry wash of *The Verdict*, Lumet sketched his adopted city in every light.

Often thought of as an actor's director, Lumet was also blessed with a great eye and a boundless energy that he used to corral what was often stagebound or otherwise difficult, unwieldy material into tense, gripping cinema. *12 Angry Men* is often mentioned as his high-water mark, but it is perhaps the bleak majesty of 1951's *Prince of the City* that will eventually outshine them all. 'A cop is burning. Nobody's safe' was the film's tagline. Such conflicted moral switchbacks would define all Lumet's best work.

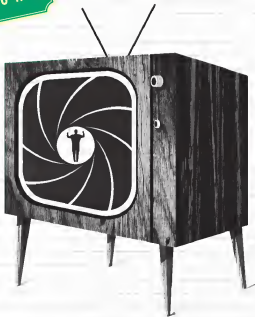


When he did stray from his beloved New York, the results were, it has to be said, something of a mixed bag. He made a couple of real gems with *Seven* (Cuney in the Offense) (set in sunny Manhattan) and *The Hill* (an Army glasshouse in North Africa), but long Island-set 'gay kiss' shocker *Deathtrap* starring Michael Caine and Christopher Reeve was a bit of a turkey, while a knee-sores-to-LA resulted in northern San Francisco thriller *The Morning After*. These, sadly, occasionally unconvincing misadventures aside, Lumet leaves behind a body of work to stand with any in post-war American cinema. ☹



MAN DOWN

>MAN<
DOWN



John Barry

November 3, 1932 - January 30, 2013

'Million Dollar Mickey Mouse music' is what John Barry made, according to the man himself. Almost everyone else will remember him as a master theme-smith whose arrangement of Monty Norman's music defined the Bond movies.

Yes, there was that tricky business with the Inland Revenue in the '70s but by then, in what was something of a lean patch, Barry could reflect from his ex-pat California home that he had knocked The Beatles off the top of the charts with 'Goldfinger', scored *Midnight Cowboy* and picked up an Oscar for *Born Free*. He also, briefly, got to call Jane Birkin 'the missus' in the days when she was cool and genuine and not at all leathery and yellow.

For some, that might have been a top enough bunch of laurels to rest upon but by 1991 Barry was back at the top of his game with awards for the scores for *Dances with Wolves* and *Out of Africa*, as well as having the distinction of providing the only inhalligible aspect of *Howard the Duck*.

Barry's foray into musical theatre with an adaptation of *Brighton Rock* in 2004 was less successful - the *Observer* describing his score as sounding 'as if a television had been left on in the background'. Its run at the Almeida Theatre was counted in weeks rather than months. The incident was a rare moment in which the Midas touch deserted the man who soundtracked sweeping big screen adventure and brought jazz and, yes, synthesizers to mainstream film scores. ☹

OBITUARIES

ROLL AWAY THE STONE

LAWless risks the wrath of the gods by playing Lazarus with a cinematic wish-list of forgotten and forsaken pleasures.

MAN DOWN

HORROR FILMS ABOUT WEIRD TINY ANIMALS

Back in the day - when horror directors knew to keep their films fast, cheap and out of control - they relied on small, furry, slimy little critters to creep the bejesus out of audiences. So we had *Night of the Lepus*, which pitted Janet Leigh and Burt Reynolds against a wreck of carnivorous rabbits in the Arizona desert. Michael Caine as killer bee disaster *The Swarm*, and the creepy but sickly Sloth: *The Mouse*.

In these days of stem cell research, nanotechnology and wildlife cloning, the time must be ripe for a cycle of films featuring waxy upon waxy of nano-controlled hive-mind chinchillas, or mice with giant bee-stings growing out of their backs, or genetically enhanced teleporting starfish. Enough of the murky B-horror and wacky B-movie shit-ups - let's get small, strange and scientific!

THE ROCK BEGINS

The new year sees the welcome return of the rock biopic after it was almost entirely destroyed by the imperfect storm of *I'm Not There's* earnest formalism and twangy Niki-Freudian bon-ticker walk the line.

So it's with something approaching hysteria that we look forward to *It's on the House!* - Harmony Korine's forthcoming biopic of Jay McInerney, in which the troubled chalet is played, in various stages of her life, by Russell Brand, Eric Cantona, a CBS flingings and the Bishop of Durham.

Korine's linear narrative in favour of a series of impressionistic memory-cubes served on a platter of gun-depleted romanticism, the film is buoyed by some astounding performances, most notably an earthy turn from Brand that will surprise and delight critics of his skilled knock-about comedies. From what we've seen, *House!* is a brave refutation of gender identity in an increasingly commodified music business, played with verve, lager and gusto. Go see.



Again and again we've been promised a second outing from the director of 2004's mind-battering mashlecore sci-fi classic *Primer*, but as yet we've had nothing. But there in the webiverse - outside of space and time - is a site for Carruth's new movie, stopnary.com, but it gives away even less than that tricky fifth viewing of *Primer* itself.

Back in June 2010, *A Topiary* was reportedly 'in the works', but months later Carruth was telling people that the cryptic website was merely a cosmic placeholder until funding was secured.

Scant details have emerged about the script but what we do know is as troubling as it is intriguing: a 30-minute prologue set in a provincial Mid-West town sometime during the '80s given way to an ensemble cast of 10 kids in possession of a 'black box' that produces possibly semi-sentient 'white discs'.

Primer was hands down one of the most intelligent science-fiction movies made on any budget, so can someone please give this man a pile of cash so that if he is going to disappoint us with a Duncan Jones Source Code moment we can just get it over with.



THE MIGHTY DOG MOVIE

"In our heads it's like Indiana Jones," *Boyz n the Barz* co-conspirator Noel Fielding said recently about the absurdist electro-jazz comedy duo's proposed silver screen voyage.

That'll be an Indiana Jones in stack heel boots, pretentiously black-quoting excerpts from *Virgil* while a short, fat American in a powder blue 00s-trent safari suit bellows out the theme from *Heath Five-O* over some tasty fusion beats that, will it?

But the clock's ticking and jungle fever doesn't last forever. It would be a real shame to think that their singular tribal thunder had been stolen by the homespun imagination of Jewish-cohort Paul King's 2009 style-conscious *Bunny and the Bull*. A deal is, however, reportedly already in place with BBC Films, so fingers crossed for the start of a series of unhinged *Boyz n the Barz* & *Crashy*-style adventures that plunge Vince Noir and Howard Moon through the warped heart of dayglo Camden existence. **B**



A Roll-Call of Honour

MAN DOWN

polos of *Hope and Strangers* as a Touché would cast very long shadows across any actor's filmography. His Broadway career was similarly fanned and his off-screen life was a happy ride to say the least.



Elizabeth Taylor

February 27, 1932 - March 25, 2011

The perception of her in her later years may have shifted into that of timeless parody, but she had one ball of a corner: *Cleopatra* and *Vergil's Aeneid* may be the overstatements, but we shouldn't overlook her juicy turn in Tennessee Williams' absurdist Southern Gothic gem *Suddenly, Last Summer*.

Kenneth Mars

April 8, 1915 - February 12, 2011

Lots got something straight: Kenneth Mars wasn't a Mars any more than Patrick Dewey lived in a 'meathouse'. He was a native Chicagoan who dedicated himself to the 'funny earnest' theory of comedy. As Franz Liebkind, author of the masterwork *Springtime for Hitler* in the *Fordhuys*, he established himself as the early-'70s go-to guy for cranked continental.

Jane Russell

June 21, 1921 - February 28, 2011

Briefly the epitome of the Hollywood pin-up girl, Russell also played Las Vegas, hung out with GIs in Normandy and cut a record called 'Bounce-a-gy'. Maybe there was more to Russell than *The Outlaw*, but it was often hard to see past her blouse-straining bosom to whatever that something might be.

Red Bull

July 25, 1941 - August 19, 2011

Chicago director Bull hit the world stage in 1969 with *Five Anguishes* by then he was already a prolific filmmaker, known mostly on the festival circuit. His work with big names like Catherine Deneuve and John Malkovich never matched the energy and subversiveness of the shorts and surrealism poems that made up the vast bulk of a career that ran from 1960.

Arthur Laurents

July 14, 1927 - May 5, 2011

Playwright Arthur Laurents wrote the books for both *West Side Story* and *Ogre*, but when he became a screenwriter things took a darker, more unsettling turn, most notably with the screenplay for Hitchcock's tense why-dunnit, *Spot*.

Maria Schneider

March 27, 1932 - February 3, 2011

Forever remembered as the woman who put the 'agreadable' into 'butter' in Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris*. For her troubles, she - along with Brenda and Bertolucci - was criminally indicted in Italy, and charged with making an 'adult' film, no accusation that was dropped only when the jury actually sat through the movie and realized it was merely sophomoric pseudo-sexual busk.

Tom Werhacington

December 5, 1918 - April 18, 2011

Rarely one of the far side of Liverpool to hear the middle name Tolensach, Werhacington, who died covering fighting in Marita, Libya, always maintained he wasn't a war photographer but a storyteller. That was easily borne out by the stunning documentary that made his name, *Revenge*, and his book of journalistic images of the soldiers featured in that movie, *Infidel*.

Riyoko Kodomo

January 1, 1904 - May 16, 2011

Don't see the cinema line that Kodomo's finest hour was his role in Naruse's *The Hidden Fortress*.

If this was true, his death wouldn't have been started in Japan by the Audio Broadcasting Company's day-long programming schedule that assumed the demise of his surprisingly popular quiz show, *Real Quiz Attack 25*.

Michael Cacopiano

June 12, 1932 - July 25, 2011

Though his compositions will secure the passing of one of their own, they may not be entirely grateful for the range of the Hellfire spirit that Cacopiano exported to the world in his most successful film, *Snake the Greek*. A worldwide reputation for living in the moment and dancing the consequences is usually not going to do them any favors when the pin-striped indie-lops from the 1990s roll into town.



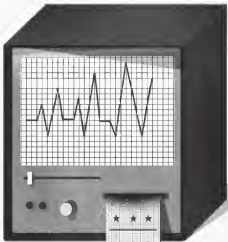
Jeff Omens

October 5, 1958 - May 27, 2011

Native New Yorker Omens played the lead role of Tony Dan in *Dances on Broadway*, but was not shy devoted to sidewalk dramas for the movie, he was also wedded with the 'Maritime slouch' in order to make star Travolta look taller. Further agency followed when he was dismissed from TV reruns forgerism. Then after his generous self-sacrifice started impacting on the show.

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MARTIN SCORSESE

sacrilege? Probably. But for all Marty's cinematic pedigree, it's been a long time since he pulled up trees with *The Departed* back in 2006. And please don't try to sell us on the dubious merits of the ludicrous, episodey Joel Schumacher-lite mind-farce of *Shutter Island*, or his workaday rolling Stones concert film, or the stodgy George Harrison biog, because we're simply not buying. The trailer for the upcoming *Hugo* looks positively embarrassing, and while his proposed 'Jesus in Japan' epic starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Benicio Del Toro sounds intriguing, it also sounds uncomfortable scenarios of sitting through *Kafka*. We don't want gangsters and gunplay every time, Marty, but maybe a trip back up the old neighbourhood wouldn't be such a bad idea every now and then.

IRANIAN CINEMA

The A-book of the conversationally competitive cineaste's armory, Iranian film looks like being a whole lot quieter in the near future after the authorities arrested six filmmakers in September of this year. They included directors Nafiseh Bahrami, Hossein Gaffarian, Ebad Afarideh and Shohreh Naderi, producer Khatoun Shabaki and documentary filmmaker Mohsen Shabaneh. Iranian state-TV has identified them only by their initials, as if to warn the six might somehow spread their artistic martyrdom into the bosom of decent, right-thinking citizenry.

ACTUALLY GOING TO THE CINEMA

How much? You seem to have mistaken my request for a pair of seats at the next screening for a burr at the Royal Opera House to watch Verdi himself conduct Maria Callas in *Aida* while I scoff perds carpaccio and white truffle off plates made from gold-plated moon-rock. The price of a date movie during the Great Depression was a cheeky smile and a ha'penny kiss; today it's north of £24, which, when you think of the purpose of the exercise, could actually be better spent on a cheap hotel.

THE DOCUMENTARY BOOM

Once, the idea of watching a feature-length documentary in a dimmed room with a lunch

of strangers seemed exciting and new. But does have spread like knotweed through the cinematic biosphere, proliferating and splintering to address ever more niche issues. So now we get Hollywood thespians battling the Japanese mafia on behalf of the people of Darfur or Morgan Spurlock - director of *Fast Food Makes You Fat* and *Heave Him to Heave* - leaning in on the earth-shattering revelation that overeating is a capitalist business intent on making money with *The Greatest Movie Ever Sold*. We've gone from the roof of the world to a segment of *The One Show* in less than a decade.

'80S REMAKES

With *RoboCop*, *Reign of Terror*, *Grease*, *Speculative*, *Idea Central*, *Alta-Filler*, *of RoboCop* and *Reign of Terror* - in-the-works, a similarly uninspiring retread of *Red Dawn* is the plan, and Arthur, Friday the 13th and Footloose having already arrived DGA, isn't it time we threw a spanner into Travolta's dangerously overworked '80s remake milliner? Fans of the originals don't want their prized shit messed with, and the kids - judging by the recent no-shows for *Cherry 2000* and *Friday Night* - just don't care (or even know) about the dubious legacy of overexposed '80s pop that was actually pretty shocky the first time round.

JOHNNY DEPP

Not Johnny? We all love Johnny! Well, yes, we do, but just cast your mind back to the last of his films that you would even remotely consider watching again: *The Tourist*. Not us. *Zeig*? It really should have worked, but... Public Enemy? Nah. *Alice in Wonderland*? *Shrek*? *Don't Secret Mumbo*? Not so easy, is it? You'd surely have to go all the way back to 2003 and the first *Pirates* film for a true, copper-bottomed success. Something of a crusade now approaches with his role in Bruce Robinson's adaptation of Hunter S Thompson's A *Half-shielded semi-autobiographical novel *The Run*. *Barry* promising a possible return to form, while yet another reduction turn as a whif-faced-gothic-oddball-in-a-funny-hat for Tim Burton's *Dark Shadows* suggests we can't be entirely sure of getting our Johnny back any time soon. ☹*

NURSE, THE
CODEINE!

VEGETATIVE
STATE

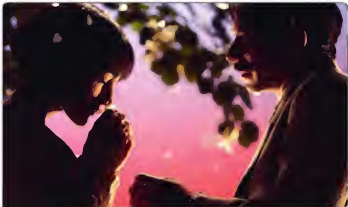


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CHICKEN WITH PLUMS

DIRECTED BY Marlene Slovicz/Tanger/Paramount **R14** 2012

Feeling Marlene Slovicz adapts her own graphic novel, starring Maribel Aranzac as a temperamental musician who takes to his bed when his favorite instrument is broken. If you missed it at the BFI London Film Festival, you can get a taste of its quiet pleasures in the online trailer.

THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT 3

DIRECTED BY Eduardo Sanchez, Daniel Myrick **R14** 2012

Gossip *Paranormal* *Slurp* brought found-footage horror back into cinema sixteen years ago, prompting Eduardo Sanchez and his collaborator Daniel Myrick to return to the granddaddy of the genre: studio Lonesome is home, apparently. Let's hope it's an improvement on the dreadful *Book of Shadows*.

INSIDE LLEWYN DAVIS

DIRECTED BY Ethan Coen, Joel Coen **R14** 2013

News The Coen brothers will follow up *True Grit* with a look at the 1960s folk scene in Greenwich Village. Loosely based on the book *The Mayor of MacDougal Street*, by fabled New York scenester Dave Van Ronk, it will hopefully take the siblings back to the musical stylings of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

UNTITLED BLADE RUNNER PROJECT

DIRECTED BY Ridley Scott **R14** 2014

Gossip Not content with reviving the *Blade* franchise with *Tron: Legacy*, Scott is also said to be prepping a sequel to his 1984 sci-fi classic. Rumor has it that Scott Z. Burns, the screenwriter of *The Bourne Ultimatum*, has been tasked with working up a screenplay. Perhaps we too will finally see C-beams glaze in the dark over the *Turk182* case.

THE PLACE BEYOND THE PINES

DIRECTED BY Derek Cianfrance **R14** 2013

Castings Ryan Gosling reunites with his *Blue Valentine* director for this action drama, also starring Bradley Cooper and Kate Winslet. Plus, it sounds sensationally similar to *Drive*. Gosling plays a motorcycle stunt rider who commits a crime to provide for his wife and child. Keep your fingers crossed for a cranking electro-pop soundtrack.

SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS

DIRECTED BY Martin McDonagh **R14** M-13-2012

Castings The Irish playwright-turned-director has lured his old *In Bruges* star Colin Farrell for this black comedy about a screenwriter (Farrell) who takes inspiration from a pair of dogsnappers (Christopher Walken and Sean Penn). Filming began in LA this summer.



J. EDGAR

DIRECTED BY Clint Eastwood **R**A January 2012

Postage DiCaprio has the heavy part in the stellar FBI chief in Eastwood's biopic, but it's Aaron Hankins in his understated, intense role as J. Edgar Hoover who's winning all the plaudits. From the look of the malar, J. Edgar looks to be in satisfying form as Hoover's legendary mission.

EXTREMELY LOUD AND INCREDIBLY CLOSE

DIRECTED BY Stephen Daldry **R**A February 2012

Postage The director of *The Hours* looks to have tapped the trouble factor on Jonathan Silverman's novel, with newcomer Thomas Horn as the precocious youngster dealing with the loss of his father (Tom Hanks) in the 9/11 attacks. The aerial thriller, filled with unswerving emotion and underscored by U2, does not fill us with hope.

TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE

DIRECTED BY Steve McQueen **R**A 2013

News Shame isn't even cool from the area yet and McQueen and Michael Fassbender have already set forth on their next project: a period piece set in mid-1800s New York about a middle-class black man (Chiwel Ejiofor) kidnapped and sold into slavery in the south. Brad Pitt is in the producer's chair and will take a role in front of the camera, too.

JOHN DIES AT THE END

DIRECTED BY Don Coscarelli **R**A 2012

U/T The creator of *Phantom of the Opera* is going to return with another low-budget, cult-favorite-in-waiting with one of the best titles of the year. The plot involves a hallucinogenic drug that users never wake up. Or something. The trailer doesn't make that, or anything else, very clear.

KILLER JOE

DIRECTED BY William Friedkin **R**A 2012

News Early word from the film festival season says that the *Exorcist* director is reaching back to his gray 1970s film with the pulp, violent thriller. Matthew McConaughey as the cop-turned-kidnapper, flanked by Brad Pitt as his mother in a return to his usual laconic with his star (Juno Temple).

CHILD OF GOD

DIRECTED BY Jerrold Friesen **R**A 2014

Grass James Freese hopes to step behind the camera and take on Cormac McCarthy's only novel, though who knows when he'll have time in his packed schedule to do it. The 1973 book isn't exactly lush stuff, telling the story of a violent, neurotic hobo as he descends into madness.

LIFE OF PI

DIRECTED BY Ang Lee **R**A December 2012

News Fox clearly has a lot of faith in Ang Lee's adaptation of Yann Martel's *Pink Panther* winner, naming Tobey Maguire. The studio has given a prize release date opposite *The Hobbit*'s first installment and Brad Pitt's *World War Z*. Roll on Christmas 2012, we say.

THE RAID

DIRECTED BY Gareth Evans **R**A Early 2012

Postage Keep an eye out for this film festival favorite next year. Welsh director Gareth Evans has created a hyper-kinetic, gun-soaked action movie filled with intensity and a cast of unknowns. A totally breathless, dialogue-free roller coaster ride.

RUST AND BONE

DIRECTED BY Jacques Audiard **R**A 2012

News The *A Prophet* director has announced his next project, an adaptation of Greg Denoe's short story collection, naming *Marianne*. Castled as a boxer's moll. The book's synopsis promises fighting dogs, penitentiaries, sex addicts and gamblers. Get excited.

ROBOPOCALYPSE

DIRECTED BY Steven Spielberg **R**A July 2013

News If you're a fan of *Minority Report*, you'll be pleased to learn that Spielberg is going back to the future with this sci-fi pic set in the aftermath of a robot uprising. If you're a bigger fan of Spielberg's historical dramas, then look forward to his *Abraham Lincoln* biopic, starring Daniel Day-Lewis as the Great Emancipator himself.

THE DICTATOR

DIRECTED BY Larry Charles **R**A May 2012

News Sacha Baron Cohen's latest attempt to get British comedians chomping on their popcorn finally has a release date, though the creators aren't letting much else out of the bag. Word is, it's a love story of sorts between the apocynous tyrant and the country he can't let go of.

PROMETHEUS

DIRECTED BY Ridley Scott RIA June 2012

Gossip Is it an alien prequel or just a horror thriller set in the same world as Scott's original *Alien*? We'll find out for sure on June 1, but we've been hearing a few rumors. One: there will be buzzsaws. Two: IIR Giger is involved. And three: Weyland-Yutani, the derisive conglomerate, plays a central role.

LABOR DAY

DIRECTED BY Jason Reitman RIA 2015

Cast Reitman's second film with Diablo Cody. Young *Abel*, here's even come out yet, and he's already announced the follow-up: a road-trip movie featuring Kate Winslet as a depressed single mom who offers an escaped convict (Josh Harts) a ride.

THE GAMBLER

DIRECTED BY Martin Scorsese RIA 2015

News Marley will reunite with his *The Departed* starlet, Leonardo DiCaprio, and screenwriter William Monahan for this remake of Karl Bruck's 1974 movie. DiCaprio will take James Caan's part. The only one unhappy about that? The original movie's writer, James Toback, who wrote an angry open letter to Scorsese criticizing him for failing to ask him to take part.

JUST KIDS

DIRECTED BY Tia RIA 2015

Gossip Penn Smith is collaborating on a big-screen version of her best-selling memoir of her life as a 1950s New York punk with *Gladstone* writer John Logan. No word yet on who will play Smith, or her doomed lover, photographer Robert Mapplethorpe.

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

DIRECTED BY TBC RIA 2015

News The producers of Scorsese's *Maps and Allieck's The Town* have hired legendary *Glenanne* screenwriter Robert Towne to pen the World War II drama. From the sounds of things, it won't be a straight remake of the beloved Laurence Olivier classic, but a different take on the same story.

THE ARTIST

DIRECTED BY Michel Hazanavicius RIA Early 2012

Footage Take one word for his shorter thriller set in the same world as Scott's original *Alien*? We'll find out for sure on June 1, but we've been hearing a few rumors. One: there will be buzzsaws. Two: IIR Giger is involved. And three: Weyland-Yutani, the derisive conglomerate, plays a central role.

THE NYMPHOMANIAC

DIRECTED BY Lars von Trier RIA 2013

News Artificial Eye has bought the rights to von Trier's latest, which, at the very least, promises to present some unique distribution problems. The idiosyncratic director has promised that *The Nymphomaniac* will feature full-on, hardcore pornography. Renowned stars Willem Dafoe and Robin Williams better know what they're in for.

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

DIRECTED BY Christopher Nolan RIA 2015

Gossip Warner Bros is apparently hoping to see the *Flash* season to turn this sci-fi thriller after he wraps up *The Dark Knight*. *Flash* may just have competition though, if he wins it. Michael Bay, Alfonso Cuarón and *Harry Potter* director David Yates have all expressed an interest in Jason Rothenberg's script.

THE SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

DIRECTED BY David O. Russell RIA 2015

Cast Russell is well and truly back in the upper echelons of the Hollywood power list, if the cast for his latest is anything to go by: Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Robin De Niro, Chris Tucker, Julia Stiles and *Animal Kingdom*'s Jesse Weaver have all signed on to the adaptation of Matthew Quirk's book.





NEXT
ISSUE
LAID
BARE
MAY
2011



Paul Smith
JEANS